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WHEN SOFT VOICES DIE

“ Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory.”

Shelley.



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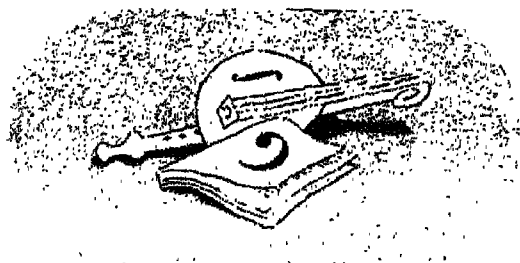


WHEN SOFT VOICES DIE

A Musical Biography

by

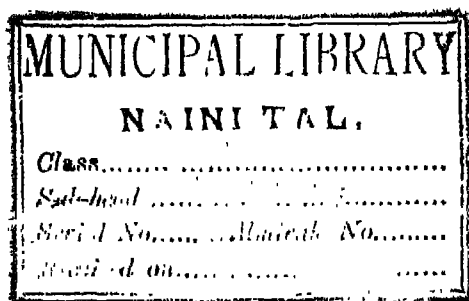
HELEN HENSCHEL



JOHN WESTHOUSE (PUBLISHERS) LIMITED

1944

For Father and Mother
with Love.



1844

NOTE.

My father's long life fell into three distinct periods: The first, as student and singer—alone. The second, with my mother, as singer and conductor. The last, after his remarriage, as singer, conductor, and broadcaster. This book concerns, with the exception of the account of his funeral, the first two only. While, as a broadcaster, I detest "chattiness," I cannot speak over the air without a sense of personal contact with my listeners. And now that I am attempting to write, I find myself, equally, thinking of readers as personal friends, to whom I write as I would speak.

H.H.

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WHEN SOFT VOICES DIE

" . . . Whose love their motion sway'd
In perfect diapason." *Milton.*

PART I.—PERFECT DIAPASON.

CHAPTER 1.

DIAPASON means, according to the Oxford Dictionary, "Combination of notes or parts in harmonious whole." The loveliest example of a harmonious whole that I have ever known was embodied in my parents, George Henschel and Lillian Bailey. And so I wish that each of them may be brought vividly to life in these pages, that the flame of joy they kindled in their lives may in some measure be kept burning for us who see them no more, and perhaps for those who never saw them.

My father was born in Breslau in 1850, of Polish descent. He was the only son of his mother, though there were three other children by his father's first marriage. I have never seen anything more complete nor more touching than my father's devotion to his mother. As for her, she adored him quite apart from her pride in his achievements. To her he was always "Der Geliebte Gute." The beloved good one. This seems to me as suitable a description as any, of my father's character; I can't imagine a more satisfactory one for a son to have evoked from his mother.

Although his family were no more musical than the average in the Germany of those days, music seems to have been his destiny from the first. Breslau was a musical city and the little boy was imbibing plenty of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven with his glasses of milk in the tea-gardens along the *Promenaden* in the spring and summer

His first appearance in public was at the age of nine, when he sang the solo in Mendelssohn's *Hear My Prayer* at a concert of the Church Music Society. He has often told me of his pride at receiving a bright new *Thaler* (three shillings) for his performance. He was of course studying the piano as well, and in 1862 found himself chosen to play Weber's *Concertstück* at a new music school which his professor had just started in Berlin. "I well remember," he wrote, "the pride of my mother as she packed my little valise for the great journey from Breslau to Berlin, putting into it among other things a brand-new suit of clothes; a short broadcloth jacket, richly braided, a beautifully embroidered shirt with frills, a lovely leather belt and a glorious pair of long trousers. Into one of the pockets the dear woman had, unknown to me, sewn a piece of superstition in the shape of a little crust of bread, to avert evil. The amusing part of this was that as I was dressing—or rather being dressed—for the concert, when I proudly put my hands into my pockets, I quickly withdrew my left hand with a cry. The dried-up sharp points of the crust had grazed my skin and very nearly prevented me from playing at the concert!"

When I was eleven my father gave me Weber's piano compositions for Christmas. His eyes twinkled.

"I was cleverer than you, Helen, because I played the *Concertstück* with orchestra when I was twelve!"

Feeling that this arrogance on the part of my twelve-year-old parent was not to be tolerated, I took my mother into my confidence and the very next day started practising the thing at a friend's house. As a surprise for my father I played it, accompanied by a section of his orchestra, at a party in our music room just before my twelfth birthday.

I don't know which of us was the most pleased.

In 1867 my father went to Leipzig to study at the Conservatoire. No longer a soprano boy, he appears to have arrived at a basso profundo via alto and tenor. I think he was secretly a little disappointed that his earlier dreams of "thousands of people crowding into the opera-house to hear the great tenor Angelini" (as I intended calling myself on the stage), did not materialise. He

soon got over that and never had any further desire to take up an operatic career, although the Liszt and Wagner circle often hoped he might. He would have made the ideal Hans Sachs, just as he was.*

In Leipzig his pianoforte teacher was Ignace Moscheles, of whom he says, ". . . on being introduced to him I felt a certain sensation of awe on shaking the hand of one who had seen Beethoven face to face and had been commissioned by the master to prepare the vocal score of *Fidelio*."

I know that I have always experienced a similar thrill, a generation later, in the knowledge of my father's life-long personal friendship with Brahms. Brahms alas! died just before I myself was to meet him.

Professor Goetze was my father's singing teacher. "I greatly enjoyed his lessons," said my father, "instinctively feeling that the modest man was laying in me the solid foundations of a vocal structure of great simplicity, intended for duration rather than show." This instinct was fully justified, as anyone will realise who heard my father broadcast on his eighty-fourth birthday, or who is familiar with the records he made just before he was eighty.

About this time he met Liszt, in some of whose works he was to sing the bass soli. "Liszt was beyond expectation kind to me," he wrote, "and I accepted only too readily his most cordial invitation to meet him at his home in Weimar. I settled for some weeks in that famous little capital and daily went to the *Gärtnerei*, a charming little garden residence placed at Liszt's disposal by the reigning Grand Duke.

"At one of those world-famed Sunday morning at-homes it was my good luck not only to see but to hear in that historic music room, besides the illustrious host himself, no lesser stars than Anton Rubinstein, Carl Tausig and Hans von Bülow." (Shades of Bach-Liszt . . . Bach-Tausig. . . .) "Here were the four greatest pianists of the world together," my father continues. "Not in a vast concert hall but in a small private room, in their shirt sleeves so to say,

*He did sing the part at a concert performance of "The Mastersingers" in Leipzig when he was eighteen.

enabling us privileged fellow-guests to compare—not from memory or distance but by immediate impression—the stupendous power of a Rubinstein with the polished infallibility of a Tausig, the irreproachable classicism of a Bülow with the enchanting grace and romanticism of a Liszt.

"In the course of the *matinée*, Liszt, pointing to a parcel he had received from Wagner the day before, and which was lying on the piano, called out to me: 'Voilà, mon cher, une jolie bagatelle pour vous.'

"Taking a stout volume of music out of the brown paper, we discovered it to be the just published score of the *Valkyrie*.

"'Allons donc, mon cher,' cried Liszt, 'chantons *Les Adieux de Wotan*!' He sat down at the piano and we read that grand Finale for the first time. . . ." (My father was then eighteen.)

'Allons donc,' cried Liszt. . . . 'We read Wotan's farewell.' . . . 'Liszt accompanied me.' . . . 'I gave a concert with Rubinstein.' . . . Can you imagine what it is like to me now to remember remarks like these as the ordinary lunch-time conversation of my childhood? I once asked my father if there really was all that difference between Anton Rubinstein's playing and that of the (really) great pianists of to-day. I use the brackets advisedly because I feel that "great" is perhaps the most overworked and ill-applied word in our modern vocabulary. He replied that technically there are hundreds who equal, and some who even excel, him, but that in his opinion not one approached Rubinstein for grandeur, dynamic energy, and real deep musical *thrill*.

"It was simply terrific," said Father.

In 1870 my father transferred himself to Berlin, to continue his studies at the High School of Music, of which Joseph Joachim was the head, and where Professor Adolf Schulze became his singing teacher. Knowing that his parents could not easily afford all his education, my father was determined to make himself independent as soon as ever he could. He gave lessons at a shilling an hour, and for over a year dined at a little restaurant for sixpence a meal, along with Robert Haussmann who afterwards became the cellist of the Joachim quartet.

During his stay in Berlin he met Madame Schumann, the Joachims, and most of the other great musicians living there. He had a profound admiration for Frau Joachim, whose beautiful singing was never as generally known to English audiences as was the playing of her famous husband. From my father's description, her singing must have been unusually satisfying, for besides a glorious contralto voice she possessed great depth of feeling, a keen intellect, and a subtle sense of humour. Personally I feel the last three attributes are as important for an artist as the first!*

Frau Joachim and my father used to appear a great deal together at the various music festivals in Germany and he was full of charming stories about her. One of his particular *chevaux de bataille*—specially identified with him all his life—was Schubert's *Das Wandern ist des Müllers Lust*. Frau Joachim always called it "Ratten-titten." Anyone who knows the song will recognise this as a happy sobriquet for its lovely accompaniment. Often she would do a little dance to it in the green-room while my father was singing it in the concert hall.

He was by now established as a "rising young singer;" musical agencies had only just come into existence and there was no business manager to arrange nice comfortable tours for him, so he seems to have spent an enormous amount of time travelling from one place to another, accepting all engagements as they were offered to him.

It was in 1874 that my father first met Brahms. As his "Personal Recollections of Brahms" appear as a separate chapter in this book, I will leave them to speak for themselves. But I would like to remember here an occasion not very long ago when I was giving a lesson on a song of Brahms, the beautiful *O wüsst' ich doch den Weg zurück*. (Op. 63, No. 8.) As it was not one in my own repertoire, I wanted to make quite sure about its right tempo; so I rang up my father and asked him to hum it into the telephone. This he did (I hasten to say at the tempo at which I'd been playing

*The great Polish opera singer, Marcella Sembrich, asked what she considered the most important qualifications for a singer, replied: "A heart, a brain and a sense of humour." And added, "Of course, a bit of voice is also a good thing!"

it!), adding, "Oh, how often I've sung that song with Brahms at the piano!" My pupil was so excited at being confronted with this direct link that she could hardly go on singing.

My father's first appearance in England was at a Monday "Pop" in St. James' Hall on February 19th, 1879, the day after his twenty-ninth birthday. I am told by my friend, Miss Edith Hipkins, the daughter of Alfred Hipkins of Broadwood's, who wrote many valuable works on the history of the pianoforte, and was a great authority on old keyboard music, that my father "swept all before him."

One of my greatest pleasures is to go on a Sunday afternoon to visit Edith Hipkins in her little flat, where she lives with her birds, her devoted maid, her clavichord, and above all, her memories. But you are not to imagine a fragile old lady looking wistfully backward. She is a very lovely woman with quantities of beautiful white hair, a skin of enviable natural freshness, an enchanting speaking voice and a grand sense of humour. One of those rare people to whom one really *could* "listen for hours." I have done so many a time, and happily still do so.

She has told me much about my father in those very early days. "He burst upon us all," she says, "like a great wind, with his glorious voice, his flashing eyes and his splendid vitality. He was invited everywhere at once, and appeared even to *be* everywhere at once! Everybody was talking about him and was carried away by him.

"As for your pretty mother," she adds, "she was too charming for words. And how jealous we all were when your father got engaged to her. That this glorious creature"—I gathered that the devotion of the flapper of to-day to the newest film-star is as naught to the frantic passions of the Eighties—"that this glorious creature should be going to marry a very young and unknown singer from America seemed unbearable! But quite understandable, too. How pretty she was. So gentle and amusing. And she sang like a little bird. . . ."

With this introduction, let me say something about my mother's family.



'We thank Thee for those blessings
we've NEVER received . . .'



. . . "superb whole hoggishness."

My grandmother, Helen Hayden, was of real old New England stock. If I write her name before that of her husband, Lucien C. Bailey, it is because New England blood in an American family always seems to preponderate over every other sort of ancestry. Then, too, I had six Hayden great-uncles, most of whom fought in the Civil War, and many of my very earliest recollections are of the lovely old Hayden homestead in the hills of Massachusetts where I used to be taken for summer holidays with my father and mother.

My grandparents were living in Columbus, Ohio, when my mother, Lillian June Bailey, was born on January 17th, 1860.

She seems to have been brought up like any other American child, receiving an admirable education in what in America is called "the public school," where she took life and work with great seriousness—not to say solemnity. I suppose it was the influence of her Methodist forbears (my mother herself and my father were Unitarians) which imbued her at a very early age with an almost morbid conscientiousness. This remained with her all her life, my father vainly trying to cure her of it. How often have I heard him beseech her to give up the unequal contest between her accounts and a discrepancy of fourpence or even less. I am inclined to think that she never went to bed at night without catechising herself with the utmost severity as to any possible thing left undone which she ought to have done. *She*—more nearly completely good than anybody I have ever known!

There is a nice story of her young days (she was about four) which illustrates the trend of her early bringing-up. One afternoon she was left to play in a room by herself. Suddenly my grandparents became aware of earnest and admonitory murmurs. On investigating, they found their child deep in a dolls' prayer meeting. She had arranged in a row all the chairs that she could find, had placed her dolls upon them, and with her eyes screwed up very tight and her hands reverently folded was delivering herself in squeaky but unctuous tones of the following surprising sentiment:

"Oh Lord (*crescendo*), OH LORD! We *THANK* Thee for those blessings we've *NEVER* (*ff*) received!"

Later, during her schooldays, she became greatly impressed with the prowess in mathematics of a certain Bertha Farr. The name of this paragon finally became extremely boring to my grandparents. What parents have not suffered under these obsessions of their children?

"Must you keep talking about Bertha Farr?" said my exasperated grandmother at last. "Who is Bertha Farr, anyway?"

Her daughter replied with withering scorn. "You don't know Bertha Farr? Why, she's **WORLD RENOWNED.**"

This element of superb whole-hoggishness remained with my mother all her life.

All the Haydens loved music, though only one of the older generation took it up professionally. This was my mother's uncle, Charles Hayden, who settled in Boston, became a successful singing teacher, and died there—to my mother's lasting grief—in early middle age.

My mother developed a soprano voice of great sweetness when she was quite young, and there was never any doubt about her taking up singing professionally. Needless to say that she entered upon her musical studies with the same seriousness with which she had caused her dolls to return thanks for blessings never received. When she was still a child the family moved to Boston. Here, under her uncle's tuition, she took up her studies in good earnest, and when she was just over sixteen made her first appearance with the Cecilia Society, one of the two great choral societies of Boston.

Launched upon her public career at home, the next inevitable step was to continue her work in Europe. A family affair this. Which country to visit first? With whom to study? I can imagine the discussions, the arguments, the nodding and shaking of heads.

My mother's journal can tell far more graphically than I the progress of her life after first leaving America. To me, of course, every word of the three closely-written volumes is of the most absorbing interest; but I think that the first impressions of this eighteen year-old American coming to Europe sixty years ago will entertain and interest even those who did not know her

I could not resist leaving in the delightful bits about the kindness of the first mate (complete with capital letters) and other naïve sidelights. It is remarkable, I think, to see how spiritedly she survived those frightful long sight-seeing days, the mere reading of which made me ready to take to my bed with a couple of aspirins.

CHAPTER 2.

THE JOURNAL, 1878.

S.S. "Canopus." Thursday, June 20th.* Tuesday at noon the *Canopus*, numbering Mamma, Aunt Annie, Uncle Charley and myself among its passengers, left the pier at Boston for Liverpool. The parting was pretty hard for Mamma and myself, but I think we got over it very well, though poor Papa felt pretty bad.

There are nineteen passengers including ourselves.

Uncle Charley and I are the well ones, neither of us having been sick yet. We have had a very smooth passage so far, and rather disagreeable weather, a good deal of fog and rain. This morning, they tell me, several whales were seen, but I was not on deck early enough to enjoy them. One very interesting diversion I have in the shape of a mail-bag which Mary Covell got up for me. There are about a dozen letters in it for me from various friends of mine. I am allowed to take out one each day, and that must satisfy me unless the letter should happen to be very short, in which case I may take out another.

Saturday, June 22nd. It is evening, and we are all in the cabin, where there is a nice open fire. Mamma, Aunt A., the Captain and another gentleman are playing whist, Uncle C. and Miss Wright are playing letters and Professor Dunbar and his son are reading.

Of course we come to know our fellow passengers better every day. The Professor and his son have joined our party. Aunt A's wit I think attracted him (the Prof.). He has laughed a good deal over her bright sayings. Last evening we had a good romping game of Puss in the Corner.

This morning the weather was simply perfect. It was quite

*The *S.S. Canopus* was about the size of a cross-channel steamer of to-day, but not nearly so comfortable.

As the vessel has shifted & there
has been a good deal more
motion of late to suit our diet
& feel the ship go away more
abundant on our side & stay here
it on the other. Of course the
is disagreeable for the sick
however & I ought to feel sorry
for them. The only way to do
deplorable things about the
voyage are the smell of
the cattle which we get re-
sponsibly & the wind. The last
to be there have troubled us
only two nights. But they are
very disagreeable - The first night
off to the hold of my ear & last
night. I had no sleeping all
the way. My letter Sunday was from
Fanny Hamilton, yesterday I was
sincerely of course delighted to find one
from William & this morning I had got
from Fanny & 18th Nov

A page from my mother's diary.

cold but perfectly clear and the wind was very strong. The indigo-blue water was covered with white caps. Immediately after breakfast Miss W. and I walked a mile (38 times around the deck).*

Tuesday, June 25th. Sunday passed as most of the rest of the days, in reading, walking, talking, eating (which is a very important item on board ship). In the morning I managed to draw the First Mate into conversation. I like him extremely. Miss W. and I have come to the conclusion that he is the nicest of all the sailors, not even excepting the Captain. This morning he took me out on the bow of the ship. It was perfectly glorious! I think it by far the nicest part of the ship I have been in yet. It is very good of the Mate to take me because it was really quite a troublesome matter for him to do so. I have enjoyed the voyage more the last two days as the wind has shifted and there has been a good deal more motion. I love to sit on deck and feel the ship go way, way down on one side and way, way up on the other. Of course this is disagreeable for the sick persons and I ought to feel sorry for them. The only real disagreeable things about the voyage are the smell of the cattle, which we get occasionally, and the mice. The latter to be sure have troubled us only two nights but they are very disagreeable. The first night one took hold of my ear and last night I had one running all over me.

Saturday, June 29th, 4 p.m. We have just stopped and here we must remain until 7.30 for the tide, before we can get into Liverpool which is twelve miles from here. Our voyage is about finished and it certainly has been a very pleasant one. I really feel almost sorry at the thought of landing.

Sunday, June 30th, Chester. What an eventful day this has been! I hardly know where to begin my account of it. We did not land last night as we expected to. I do not yet understand why it was impossible to do so and probably never shall. We arrived at Liverpool about ten last night and after going backward and

*Four times round is a mile on a modern liner

forward for ages as it seemed, in the harbour, were informed that we could not land until the morning. About eleven our whole party were about famished, and at the Captain's invitation went down into the cabin and had a nice little supper. We stayed and sat around the table until about midnight, singing songs and having a very jolly time. This morning about eight they came for us and we stepped off the *Canopus* at last. I must say I was almost sorry to leave, everything about the voyage has been so pleasant. The Captain was very nice to me all of the voyage.

Chester. What an old, old town this is! The houses, or at least a great many of them, are the queerest, oldest places imaginable. A great many of them look just like old houses in the theatre. We walked quite around the wall of the town. In many places the view from this wall is very lovely. At 6.30 we went to service in the Cathedral. This I enjoyed more than anything else. What a grand old place it is! So immense, and so old. The service was splendid. Every word of it intoned. There is something inspiring in hearing a whole congregation sing a service. I feel almost as though I hated my own church when I go to such a place as this. One can really worship in this church. I thought of Charles Kingsley every moment. How I wished he was there! I can well imagine him in that grand old Cathedral. It seems just the place for him.

We have just come in from the garden which belongs to the Hotel (Queen's Hotel). It is perfectly lovely. Such beautiful trees and grass and ferns. I must stop now, or I shall not feel like getting up in the morning. Uncle Charley and I are going to Liverpool at 9 o'clock to see about the baggage and then on to Leamington.

Monday, July 1st, Leamington. This morning Uncle C. and I went to Liverpool to attend to the baggage. We had a pretty discouraging time of it, being obliged to go to several places before obtaining any satisfactory information concerning it, but we finally settled it nicely. Upon our return to Chester we found Mamma and Aunt Annie very enthusiastic over Eaton Hall, where they had

spent their morning. It is the estate of the Marquis of Westminster* and is one of the largest private estates in England.

At 2.30 Mrs. Johnston and Miss Wright arrived from Liverpool and we spent the afternoon together. In addition to the places I wrote about yesterday, we saw an old, old house in which Bishop Lloyd used to live. It is very interesting and curious. On the front of the house are carvings in wood illustrating different stories from the Bible. Another curious place is called "God's Providence House." It is the only house in Chester which escaped the plague, and has on the front, "God's Providence is my Inheritance." We went to the most fascinating Curiosity Shop, where they had a great deal of old carved furniture. Uncle C. could hardly tear himself away, and now he has made up his mind to visit Chester on his way home, and buy several old pieces.

At 4.20 we left for Leamington and arrived at 8.0. Mr. Gere had already engaged rooms for us at the Regent, one of the nicest hotels in the place. As yet we have not seen Leamington, but what little we saw on our way from the station is perfectly beautiful. It is entirely different from Chester. The one is old, the other a new watering place. I have no doubt we shall find Leamington more beautiful but not so interesting historically. Mr. Gere and his daughter called on us in the even and are coming for us to-morrow morn to go to Warwick and Kenilworth.

Tuesday, July 2nd. This has been a most delightful day. At 9 o'clock this morn Mr. Gere came for us and we went first to Warwick Castle. The drive there is lovely and the Castle itself—how can I describe it? It was such an entirely new experience for me, I have read about such places, but have never realised that such things did exist. The entrance to the grounds is cut out of solid rock, with which it is bounded on either side, and the rock is covered with moss and ivy. It seems to me that I never in my life was in such a lovely place as that short avenue. The grounds are immense and perfectly superb. The most gorgeous trees I ever saw. There are a number of Cedars of Lebanon, brought from

*Americans read Debrett more carefully nowadays!

Lebanon at the time of the Crusades. The Avon river runs through the place and is visible from the windows on one side of the Castle, and makes, together with the surrounding scenery, a perfectly enchanting view. We were shown the celebrated Warwick Vase, older than Warwick Castle and found in the river at Hadrian's Villa, Tivoli. At the gate was an old woman who showed us a number of relics of Guy, Earl of Warwick, the giant who is said to have been nine feet in height. Everything which she had to show was proportionately and ridiculously large. His armour, his implements of war, the rib of a cow he is said to have killed, and numerous other things. She told her story without interruption or hesitation, and I have not the slightest doubt that it was word for word the same that she has told to thousands of other travellers. The most interesting thing she had to exhibit was an enormous punch-bowl of copper. It was made originally for porridge but has been used since as a punch-bowl. She told us exactly the number of gallons of brandy, and water, the number of lemons, the number of hundreds of pounds of sugar, etc., required to fill it and said that she had seen it filled and emptied three times in one evening at a fête given at the Castle.

In the Castle itself we were first shown into the armoury, a very large hall filled with armour and battle implements. If I were to continue and relate everything I saw I should fill this book with Warwick alone. Suffice it to say, I felt as though I had just stepped into a book. We went through room after room each containing some new object of interest. In one room is a table valued at £10,000. It is a Venetian piece of work and is inlaid with precious stones, beautiful only as a work of art and a curiosity. One bedroom was furnished with furniture which belonged to Queen Anne. I saw to-day for the first time original pictures by the great masters—Rubens, Raphael, Vandyke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Titian, Veronese and a host of others.

Leaving Warwick we proceeded to the ruins of Kenilworth. Here it is of course very different. The grandeur of Kenilworth is something of the past and we have our imagination only to draw upon to conceive of what it was when Queen Elizabeth was there

entertained by Robert, Earl of Leicester. It is now nothing but a glorious old ruin overgrown with ivy.

On our way back we drove through the estate of Lord Leigh, a gentleman having a yearly income of £60,000. His place is miles in extent and is perfectly beautiful.

We reached Mr. Gere's house at 1.30 and after dining went in the afternoon to a flower show in the famous Jephson Gardens. The display was perfectly beautiful and I never saw such roses in my life as I have since I have been in England. Every house, no matter how mean, has its flower garden, and the roses are particularly fine. Those at the flower show were simply superb. The strawberries here are also a marvel to us all. They are almost ridiculous, they are such queer shapes and so immense. After a stroll in the Gardens which are beautiful we returned to Mr. G's where we took tea and after a pleasant chat returned to our Hotel. To-morrow we are going to Stratford-on-Avon, and Miss Gere is going with us. She is lovely, I have quite fallen in love with her, and was so sorry she could not go with us to-day. However, she takes her father's place. I think this a good place to give my impressions of English people. I suppose we have really seen only the commoner class of the people for occasionally we will see a person who has an entirely different look from the "crowd" and who is evidently a gentleman or a lady. But the majority of the people look as though they had just stepped out of one of Dickens' novels. They are exactly one's idea of the English, but it is almost startling to have one's impressions so verified. We commenced to laugh before we stepped off the boat, at the figures we saw on the deck and we have not stopped since. The dressing of the women is simply ridiculous. The women are much worse looking than the men. I suppose that is because we see more gentlemen than ladies. I have seen some really very swell looking young men, but hardly one finely appearing woman. At the Show this afternoon the display of dress was perfectly ridiculous.

Wednesday, July 3rd, Oxford. We arrived this afternoon at 5.30 and proceeded at once to our hotel. We took a short walk

before and another after tea. Our big Oxford day is of course to-morrow, although we got sort of an idea of the city. It is almost the most interesting place I have been in yet. The buildings are the oldest looking things that one can imagine. We saw to-day several churches (only the exterior) several of the universities and a number of other interesting buildings. We saw the Sheldonian theatre, which holds easily 4,000 people. I have seen such quantities of swell fellows, and I must confess to enjoying it very much.

To go back to Leamington: We drove to Stratford-on-Avon this morn and went directly to Shakespeare's house. It is the quaintest old house imaginable. A great many interesting things were shown us. After leaving the house we went to the church where Shakespeare is buried. This impressed me more than anything or any place I have been in yet. I think the reason is the fact that a man played on the organ all the time we were there, and everything is 20 times as much to me if I have music with it, as it would be without. The avenue which leads up to the church is very beautiful and the church itself quite pretty—it is on the river Avon. Shakespeare is buried here, also his wife and children. There is a bust of him over the chancel which is supposed to be the best likeness in existence of the poet. I saw the font out of which he was baptised. In this church I really felt as though I were in a sacred place, and really was very much affected.

On our way home we went through Charlote Park, which belonged to Sir Thomas Lucy. Shakespeare stole a deer from his park and Sir Lucy made such a disturbance that S. was obliged to go to London. It proved very much the worse for Sir Thomas for S. has immortalised him in verse by ridicule. The next place at which we stopped was the hospital for old men established by Robert Earl of Leicester. This proved very interesting. They have accommodation only for twelve men and their wives (if they have them) but for no children. It was originally founded for the retainers of the Earl's household, but they have run out, and now when one of the men dies another is selected by a certain nobleman in the place. When a man dies, his wife is obliged to leave (the fees which the men receive being set aside for the widows when

obliged to leave). The next and last spot which we visited was the church at Warwick, where the Earl of Leicester and Lord Beauchamp are buried. Lord Beauchamp's tomb is considered the second handsomest one in the world, that of Henry V at Westminster being the handsomest. Lord B's is of marble and brass, and to my eye is simply hideous. We saw an old confessional in this church, the steps of which are almost worn away.

Friday, July 15th, London. Here we are in the immense London. I am almost tired to death, we have walked so much to-day. Yesterday we did Oxford, visiting several of the Colleges. The only modern one is Keble. We went into the chapel only of this College and it certainly is the most gorgeous thing I ever saw. The windows are beautiful and the walls are completely covered with Roman mosaics.

Magdalen College is one of the largest and the most richly endowed. This is gorgeous and venerable too. In this College we were shown several of the young men's rooms, some of which were very handsome and fitted up with a great deal of taste. We were shown the very room in which Johnson lived while in Pembroke. Wesley and Whitfield also graduated from this College but they do not know where their rooms were. We stood on the spot where Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer were burned. At 4.0 we left for London, and arriving at 6.0 came immediately to our lodgings here in Fitzroy Square. Last evening we went to Mme. Tussaud's. This I enjoyed immensely—the figures are startlingly real. In the Chamber of Horrors I was very much disappointed. It was hardly horrible at all. I had made up my mind to something absolutely blood-curdling.

After leaving our bankers we went to the Tower. This place is perfectly wonderful. We saw the site where Lady Jane Grey was executed, also where she and many others were imprisoned previous to their execution. The armorial rooms are perfectly beautiful. There are hundreds of beautiful devices on the wall, all made of weapons.

After leaving the Tower we went to St. Paul's Church. This

is a splendid old building. There are many great men buried here. The Duke of Wellington, Turner, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir Edwin Landseer, John Howard, Dr. Johnson and a score of others. The Duke of Wellington has a magnificent monument in the Church; and in the crypt, one room contains his sarcophagus and another the funeral car which is made of the guns captured at the time of his victories.

After leaving the church, we went by boat to Kew. The banks of the Thames are lovely, we enjoyed the boat ride immensely. After a short stay in the Gardens we came back here by rail, and have just come in from a short drive.

Sunday, July 7th. I am glad it is Sunday, for we have not been on the go all day long, and I am really very tired. This noon Mamma and Aunt Annie went to church. Uncle Charley and I took a short walk to Regent's Park where we stayed some time and had a real nice talk. Yesterday we went first to the British Museum. Here we saw the most astounding things. I saw the real Rosetta Stone, the Elgin Marbles, parts of the Mausoleum and hundreds of equally wonderful things, which it would be useless to attempt to describe. After leaving the Museum we went to Westminster Abbey. It is a glorious old place, we are going to service there this evening. We saw Charles Kingsley's bust which I have wanted so much to see ever since I read his life. Near it is the bust of Maurice, his great friend and fellow worker. After leaving the Abbey we went to the Aquarium which didn't amount to much. After lunching we went to the Houses of Parliament. This is a gorgeous building and interested me very much. The House of Lords is said to be the handsomest room in the world, but it is so well proportioned and in such good taste that it is not so very striking. After leaving the House we went to see the Albert Memorial. This is a most gorgeous monument, quite highly coloured and with a great deal of gilding on it. There is an immense figure of Albert in the centre in gilt.* Around the sides are figures in marble of different musicians, painters, sculptors

*"My gilt-y father," as Edward VII once said!

and poets. At the four corners of the base on which it rests are figures representing Europe, Africa, Asia and America. America is on a bison, Asia on an elephant, Africa on a camel and Europe on an ox. The whole thing is very beautiful.

We went from here (after visiting Albert Hall, an immense concert hall which seats 20,000 persons) to Hyde Park and saw the driving. This I enjoyed very much indeed, some of the turn-outs were very handsome.

We have been grievously disappointed about going to the Opera. We had planned to go last night to hear Patti in *Dinorah*, but she was ill and didn't sing. To-morrow (our last evening here) they give *Trovatore* with Patti and Nicolini. I should like to hear them both but it seems wicked to spend our money to see *Trovatore*. I hardly think we shall go. This a.m. Mamma and Aunt Annie went to church. This eve we are going to the Abbey.

It having been decided that my mother's studies should begin in Paris, under the famous teacher Mme. Pauline Viardot, they left London in the early days of July and settled down, after various movings and changes, to a regular and strenuous life there. Not a moment of the young creature's day seemed to be unoccupied. I remember in my own childhood the constant admonition, "Don't waste time!"; following out, I suppose, this ingrained idea that one must forever be "accomplishing" something. But I know that some of the most valuable experiences of my life have been gained when apparently "accomplishing" nothing whatever.

Just before beginning her lessons, my mother writes in the Journal :

"Wednesday evening we called on Mme. Viardot. She was very pleasant indeed and I am sure I shall like her exceedingly. She was not wildly enthusiastic about my voice, but what she said was so discriminating and sensible that it gave me confidence immediately. I sang *Connais-tu, Gretchen am Spinnrade*, and *Aime-moi*, the first two to my own accompaniment, the latter to hers. *Gretchen* and *Aime-moi* I never sang better, the *Connais-tu* did not go so well. She is evidently great on execution and as I have not much of any I think that is the reason she was not more demonstrative. However, she said she could make something of me, that there was a great deal of good and a little bad in the singing, and I really think was very much pleased; but she showed her good sense by not saying too much until after she has given me lessons and knows my voice and my singing better. I am to commence my lessons as soon as we are settled and then won't I work hard?"

Well, she did—very hard. And saw everything there was to see in Paris too, noting it all most carefully in her Journal. She sang to Gounod, who was delighted with her. "Gounod kissed my hand!" she informed her diary with great pride. She made friends with Widor, the famous organist of St. Sulpice, who taught her a number of his songs. One of them, *L'Abeille*, a charming little trifle, remained in her repertoire all her life.

February 1879, found her back in London and rapidly approaching her Fate! She had been given introductions to Professor Cusins, then conductor of the Royal Philharmonic Society, to Sullivan and many others. Sullivan advised her to study with Randegger, and she evidently decided to do so.

But directly Mr. George Henschel appeared on the horizon, he seems to have taken matters entirely into his own hands. At any rate, Miss Bailey appears as Mr. Henschel's "star pupil" very shortly after their first meeting on March 9th, 1879.

Says the Journal :

"*March 10th.* Well, the grand party is over and was a great success." (The party was at the Cusins' house.) "At about a quarter to ten we went to the Cusins. Joachim, Henschel, Sir Julius Benedict, Walter Macfarren, Thomas the harpist, and quantities of celebrities were there. I sang, and although not singing my very very best did very well. They all seemed much pleased and said that it was about certain that I would sing in the Philharmonic. I had a lovely time. Henschel sang, and sang superbly."

And here is what my father has to say about it :

"It was in March, 1879, that a thing happened to me which marked a turning-point in my life, offering at the same time a striking illustration of the fact that the most momentous incidents in a man's existence are often the result of accident.

One fine afternoon I chanced to meet in the street the wife of the conductor of the Philharmonic, Mrs. Cusins, to whom a few days before I had sent my regrets at being unable to accept her kind invitation to dinner on March 9th.

'So sorry, do try and come *after* dinner,' she begged. 'A very charming young girl from Boston is going to sing and we want your opinion as to whether she sings well enough for an appearance at one of the Philharmonic concerts.'

I promised to do my best and little thought, as on the evening of the 9th of March I entered the Cusins' drawing-room in Nottingham Place, that two years later, to the day, the young lady I had come to hear would be standing at my side before the minister of the Second Church in Boston, Massachusetts, who

pronounced us man and wife. *Of course* Lillian Bailey sang well enough for a first appearance in England at the Philharmonic, which took place soon afterwards. Indeed I doubt if even at those venerable concerts a young girl of nineteen has met with a more cordial reception. In the second part of the programme—she had in the meantime become my pupil—I had the privilege of joining her in the duet *Caro-Bella* from Handel's *Giulio Cesare*, and when a few weeks later, at one of those charitable Guild dinners in the City we repeated that duet, and the stentorian voice of the toast master commanded silence for 'Miss Lillian Bailey and Her(r) Henschel,' he was not very far out. In July of the year following, the good ship *Australia* of the Anchor Line, sailing from Victoria Docks, London to New York, had on board Mr. and Mrs. Bailey, Master Hayden Bailey, Miss Bailey and, indeed, 'Her Henschel'."

Thus were the Henschels launched upon their career.

CHAPTER 3

Before their career of vocal recitals began, my father spent three winters in Boston as the conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

I often imagine what a thrill, what a tremendous thrill, it must have been to a young musician to receive on his honeymoon a telegram offering him the delightful task of forming a brand-new Symphony Orchestra for Boston, and of conducting it!

The telegram was from Henry Lee Higginson, one of those enviable people who are endowed with a real deep-rooted love of music, and equally with so much of this world's riches as to make it easy to carry out so costly a project as the formation of a great orchestra. He had heard my father conduct a concert of the old-established Harvard Musical Society in 1881, and had been much impressed with the young conductor.

A mere honeymoon ought to be excitement enough, it seems to me, without the added one of being offered such a wonderful job.

"All details were settled after my return to Boston," writes my father. "I engaged the members of the orchestra, selecting them, at Mr. Higginson's very wise suggestion, as nearly as possible from those of the old Harvard Society and among other local players.

"During my visit to Germany I had bought a very extensive orchestral library, taking great pleasure and pride in personally indexing and cataloguing the nearly three hundred works I had acquired. Rehearsals began in October, and on the 22nd of that month the Boston Symphony Orchestra, as, with Mr. Higginson's assent I had christened it, was started on its path."

The early days of the orchestra were not by any means peaceful. The Press, for some reason, were almost unanimous in trying to kill the new venture, and in the light of subsequent events and their consequent change of attitude their animadversions now make strange reading. Fortunately, they seem to have had no effect on public opinion.

"For," writes my father, "when early in September the sale of tickets for the first season began, both Mr. Higginson and I were greatly astonished and gratified at the demand for them. As early as six o'clock on the morning of their sale, people began getting into line at the doors of the old Music Hall, one paper even asserting this to have taken place in the afternoon of the previous day. *The Transcript*, Boston's premier evening paper, asked in bewilderment: 'Where does all the audience come from? Where have all these symphony-goers been during the last ten years, that they have hidden themselves so completely from public view?' This was encouraging. I was by that time rehearsing industriously and enthusiastically with the orchestra, with all the members of which I stood on the most friendly footing and to whom, previous to beginning rehearsals, I had issued this letter:

Gentlemen,

I beg leave to say a few words to you now, in order to avoid waste of time after our work has once begun. Whenever a body of men are working together for one and the same end, as you and I, the utmost of unity and mutual understanding is required to achieve anything that is great or good.

Every one of us, engaged for the concerts we are on the point of beginning, has been engaged because his powers, his talents have been considered valuable for the purpose. Everyone of us, therefore, should have a like interest as well as a like share in the success of our work, and it is in this regard that I address you now, calling your attention to the following points with which I urgently beg of you to acquaint yourselves thoroughly:

Let us be punctual. Better ten minutes before rather than one behind the time appointed.

Tuning will cease the moment the conductor gives the sign.

No member of the orchestra, even if his presence be not needed for the moment, will leave the hall during the

time of the rehearsals and concerts without the consent of the conductor.

The folios containing the parts will be closed after each rehearsal and concert.

Inasmuch as we are engaged for musical purposes, we will not talk of private matters during rehearsals and concerts.

Hoping that, thus working together with perfect understanding, our labours will be crowned with success.

I am, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

G. H.

"Being absolutely my own master as regards the orchestra and its work, I tried several experiments in the way of the placing of the orchestra; dividing, for instance, the strings into equal halves on my right and left, with the object of enabling the listeners on either side of the hall to have the full effect of the whole string quintet. Those experiments I submitted in letters, illustrated by diagrams, to Brahms, who, in his answers commented most kindly on their practicability or otherwise. 'But,' he writes on one occasion, 'by far the best feature in all your arrangement of the orchestra is the fact that no committee will be sitting in front of it. There is not a *Kapellmeister* on the whole of our continent who would not envy you that!'

"In the making of the programmes I endeavoured to be guided by the principles laid down by the famous German writer, Gustav Freytag; in my Leipzig days I had studied his book *The Technique of the Drama*, which contained principles he had evolved from the great dramatists from Sophocles to Shakespeare. Freytag maintains that a drama should have an uneven number of acts, either three or five. The interest should steadily ascend during the first two acts, or—in the case of a five-act play—during the first three. Here should be the climax, after which the interest should gently descend, until at the end it has reached the level of the outset.

"Accordingly, with hardly an exception, I arranged the programmes thus: First, an overture; then a solo, either instrumental or vocal; the climax (the symphony) stood at the end of this first part which generally took up, as regards the length of the concert, two-thirds of the whole. The second part was then a gentle 'letting-down' from the more or less acute mental effort claimed by the first part. The scheme seemed to meet with the approval even of the critics. Anyhow, at all the concerts, which took place every Saturday evening for twenty-four successive weeks, the hall was crowded. For the public rehearsals on the Friday afternoons, for which one paid twenty-five cents at the door to every part of the house,* there was many an afternoon when people had to be turned away.

"I shall never forget the public rehearsals for the last concert of the first season, when Beethoven's Ninth Symphony—the preceding eight had all been given in the course of the series—was on the programme. I had left my house in Otis Place for Old Music Hall (the magnificent Symphony Hall of the present day did not exist then) and was crossing the Common when I observed, at least a quarter of a mile from Old Music Hall, a huge gathering of people. What a pity, I said to myself, thinking some accident had happened, that this should occur just to-day, when it will interfere with the progress of people wanting to go to the rehearsal. Imagine my surprise and, needless to add, my gratification, when on coming nearer I found that the crowd was slowly moving towards Old Music Hall. They were the very people trying to get to the rehearsal! I had to beg and elbow my way to the hall. Even there, with men and women sitting on the steps leading to the platform, I encountered some difficulty in reaching the conductor's place in time. As regards the public, therefore, there was nothing to complain of.

"But the critics . . .!"

*I wish *we* could pay a shilling at the door, to any part of the house, for public rehearsals of our Symphony Concerts!

It is not my intention to "bring that up." There is no doubt that there was what amounted to an organised Press campaign against Mr. Higginson's scheme; and consequently, of course, against the conductor of the orchestra. But it eventually exhausted itself in face of the indifference of those against whom it was directed. Or should I say non-resistance? Because I never can believe that any human being—especially an artist—can *feel* indifferent to unmerited vilification.

At the end of three seasons my father regretfully refused Mr. Higginson's offer of a long contract, being unwilling to take up the permanent residence in America which it would have involved. But he left the orchestra well and truly set on the *magnificent career which it has pursued for over fifty years since*. If, when he left, there remained any enemies among the hosts of friends he made in Boston, their voices were certainly not heard nor their pens active. I prefer to believe they did not exist.

Over fifty years later, after my father's death in September, 1934, the trustees of the Boston Symphony Orchestra adopted the following resolution which was published in the programme of the concert on October 19th :

The Trustees of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, in these more spacious days of music* are not unmindful of the time of small beginnings, or ungrateful to the spirited musician who gave the Orchestra its first impetus towards its later eminence.

When George Henschel first conducted a piece of orchestral music in Boston, he stood, not on a platform, but on the floor of the stage among the players. This typified his whole career in music, as a musician among musicians, one of themselves. Half a century after leading the first concert of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, he returned, eighty-one years old, to conduct the opening concert of the Fiftieth Anniversary Season, still a spirited musician among musicians. Now, three years later, knowing that he cannot come again to us, nor can

*I think they mean "crowded." Surely it was the *old* days that were "spacious?"

we go to him, the Trustees would make this formal record of enduring gratitude in affectionate memory of our First Conductor. . . .

At the same concert Koussevitsky conducted the *Eroica* in my father's honour.

That Fiftieth Anniversary performance must have been an extraordinary affair. I was unfortunately unable to go to Boston to hear it, as I should so dearly have liked, but many of my American friends, including Dr. Koussevitsky, have told me about it.

The programme was identical with that of the first concert in 1881. Beethoven's Overture *Weihe des Hauses* (Dedication of the House), Haydn's Symphony in B Flat, the Ballet Music to *Rosamunde*, and the *Meistersingers* Overture. This last was another of Father's *chevaux de bataille*, and I am told that the excitement and enthusiasm his performance of it evoked on this occasion was unprecedented, even considering the superb playing to which Boston audiences have naturally become accustomed.

At the first rehearsal of this anniversary performance the orchestra evidently expected to meet a rather tottery old gentleman, who would be gently piloted on to the platform, and would appear as a sort of symbolical figure, or at any rate as a mere figure-head, while the orchestra would play more or less by itself. Instead, there strode rapidly on to the stage an erect stocky man, apparently about fifty-four years old, crammed with life and vigour, of course conducting everything in this programme by heart, and giving the impression of an impatient race-horse in his joyous anticipation—of which he had spoken to me for weeks beforehand—of conducting this glorious orchestra. Father himself, telling me all about it on his return home, said: "Imagine what I felt like when I arrived on the platform for the concert and was just taking up my stick to begin the overture, to see Koussevitsky rise and begin a speech all about me, so eulogistic as to embarrass me very much indeed. I tried several times to catch his eye, whispering, But please, do let me get on with my Beethoven! But it was no use."

This modesty and dislike of exhibitionism was most characteristic of Father.

I, myself, received a similar "race-horse" impression the first time I heard Toscanini conduct Beethoven's Fifth Symphony with the B.B.C. Orchestra at Queen's Hall. It was one of those white light experiences which are impossible to forget. A rapid stride to the stage, and almost before he reached the rostrum those three G's and the long E flat were bursting out like a great raging challenge.

Many of the people who saw my father conduct have, they tell me, been struck by the affinity between him and Toscanini as conductors. The same, quick, purposeful walk on to the platform, the same direct approach to the work, the same economy of gesture, even the same little characteristics, such as sometimes keeping the left hand on the coat lapel or on the hip during straightforward passages in Mozart or Haydn which call for no effort on the part of the conductor. And, above all, the same almost deprecatory manner of acknowledging applause by a little upward wave of the hands. Now that Toscanini is a little greyer than he was, the back of his head and his massive musician's forehead are so like Father's, although he is seventeen years younger than Father, that it was almost more than I could bear, the first time I saw him after my father's death.

It seems only a few days since I spoke with him, after a rehearsal at Queen's Hall. What impressed me most, I think, was the extreme sweetness of his smile, the youthfulness and buoyancy of his whole carriage. More points of resemblance to Father.

I had asked to meet Toscanini in order to satisfy myself that I was right in thinking that he and Father had corresponded over an unforgettable *Eroica* performance.

"Yes, yes," said the Maestro in his very husky voice, beaming at me like an amiable schoolboy. "And he send me his photograph!" My father had been made happy by receiving a letter from Toscanini, which left no doubt as to the respect in which the Maestro held him. In 1936, after the London Music Festival, I myself had received—out of the blue—a photograph of Toscanini, with the inscription: "To Helen Henschel with best thoughts, and in remembrance of her dear father. Arturo Toscanini."

He and Father now stand side by side at the foot of my piano.

How often has Father sat at the keyboard of that same piano, and played as only he could play! He was never happier than when he had a beautiful instrument before him, on which he could roam from melody to melody, from recollection to possible future compositions, as the spirit moved him. He had the most beautiful touch I have ever heard, caressing the keys with infinite tenderness in quiet passages but never producing a *thin* tone.

"Even the most *pianissimo* note must still have body," he has often said to me; "nothing is worse than to hear people play a *pianissimo* passage as if they were afraid the keys would burn their fingers. On the other hand, the *fortes* and *fortissimos* must never be rigid, however heavy. Have mercy on your pianoforte and on the ears of your hearers, and let there be elasticity—always elasticity!"

It was a great joy to hear him, and see him, at the piano. To hear the actual beauty of the music and to watch his face with its sensitive mouth, its bright eyes, and to see him occasionally look up and break into a smile as he would say, "Isn't it beautiful?" Especially if it were a slow movement by Beethoven or something of Schubert. He was never tired of Schubert, whose fathomless springs of pure melody always remained for him one of the miracles in music.

"I can understand how Brahms worked," he used to say "Yes, and even Beethoven. There is struggle, intellectual, spiritual, almost physical at times. But Schubert—no! *There* is the essence of pure music, which seems distilled without any human agency at all."

Then he would wander off into yet another heavenly tune. What would I not give to hear that music once more. . . .

Before Dr. Axel Munthe recovered his sight, when the dreadful possibility of blindness lay before him, it used to give him pleasure to hear me sing Schubert all alone in my music room. On one of these occasions my father happened to drop in, and it was interesting and stimulating indeed to hear the talk between these two old

friends. Eventually they began a discussion about the slow movement of the Ninth Symphony. Father complained that in the phrase

Andante moderato



the tied note (marked by an asterisk) at the beginning of those four semi-quavers was hardly ever given its full value. "Why," he said, "because that subject is marked at a quicker tempo than the rest of the movement, it should be scamped and made unrhythmic, I cannot understand." And he played in illustration the whole wonderful movement through from beginning to end. That was another of my white light experiences. So much depends on the conditions under which one hears music, or sees great pictures. Axel Munthe in those days was a tragic figure, pulling at the heartstrings, and father was always—quite unconsciously—a healer.

Seeing him, in my mind's eye, sitting at that piano, I am reminded of an instance of his astonishing memory. I had lately heard and been deeply impressed by a work by Heinrich Schütz, *David's Lament for Absalom*, set to Latin words for bass solo, organ and four trombones. Shockingly ignorant about pre-Bach German music, I asked Father for enlightenment. He had been lunching with me, and was sitting in his favourite arm-chair smoking his pipe, chatting comfortably about this and that. He said: "Oh yes, he was a great composer indeed." He told me some more details about Schütz and went on: "What is most remarkable about him is that he wrote Passion Music before Bach was even thought of. . . . I heard his Cantata, *The Seven Last Words on The Cross*, about sixty years ago and found it tremendously impressive, beautiful. . . . Wait a moment . . . I think I can remember. . . ."

Humming gently under his breath, Father drifted to the piano. Sure enough, after a few seconds there emerged the whole superb figure, sung and played as if sixty hours and not sixty-odd years had passed since he had last thought of it.

CHAPTER 4

But to return to the early days in Boston.

I used to be taken to America with my parents whenever they went there for concert tours (almost every year) because they said they could not put three thousand miles between themselves and their only offspring. The only offspring was only too delighted. There was nothing I loved more than going to America. Everything about it was exciting. The talk beforehand with my Nanny who, of course, came too—about all the aunts and uncles and young cousins we were to meet again; the actual journey, the arrival in New York; and then the American train with its clanging bell, its peculiar way of whistling at tunnels (two long hoarse hoots followed by two short ones); and the negro car attendants who brushed you all over with a whisk-broom before you arrived in Boston, called you "Missy," and smiled at you in an abandon of white teeth, red lips and rolling eyes.

We used to stay at the Brunswick, on Boylston Street, which in those days was the luxury hotel of Boston. It has been succeeded as such by many others, but when I went back in 1932, Nanny in attendance once more, I used to eat many of my meals in the Brunswick café for old time's sake. I can recapture down to the smallest detail the sensation of blissful excitement after the long sea voyage, as I followed my parents up the stone steps of the hotel, holding on to the brass railings, so hot one August that they burned my fingers. Came the meal (probably at an hour long past my usual bed-time) in the enormous dining-room, with more enchanting negroes hovering about with strange new kinds of food like corn on the cob, and oysters, and of course the crowning glory of ice-cream in undreamed of quantities!

One of my great-aunts, who was very fond of ice-cream, used to suffer very much from a sort of Tantalus torture in regard to it when she was in England. If she asked for "an ice" at a party,

she was presented with the usual English teaspoonful sliding about on a glass dish, decorously frilled and screened by a couple of wafers. What she really wanted was an immense naked slab, flanked by a piece of cake, which is what she would have been given at home. Eventually she developed a fine technique in this matter, bribing several willing young men with her bright smile and witty talk to bring her "an ice" all at the same time; then she would settle down to enjoy "ice-cream," with the added satisfaction of having had to manœuvre to get enough of it.

This was the Aunt Annie of my mother's Journal whose "bright sayings" were thought to have caused the Professor's gravitation to their party in the *S.S. Canopus*.

She never married, but kept house in the family homestead for her father, Josiah Hayden. After his death she continued to live there for the rest of her life, occupying the position of a sort of female squire. She often came to visit us in England and would stay with us for months at a time. Much to my joy, for she was quite the most youthful member of the family except myself, and certainly the naughtiest, up to all sorts of pranks and jokes. Besides being the lucky possessor of a witty mind, she would keep us all amused by her spontaneous "bright sayings," which came as naturally to her tongue as ordinary talk to us.

But, in common with her younger sister and her numerous brothers, she stood in considerable awe of her father, from whom she seems to have inherited her flair for *le mot juste*. There is a story of an evening at supper, when the supply of food on the table did not appear to the old man to be adequate. In a frigid voice he enquired :

"Is this . . . *all*, daughter?"

And being answered rather apprehensively with :

"Why, yes, Father. But——"

he cut short her assurance that she could easily supply more, by immediately saying Grace as follows :

"Oh Lord, we thank Thee for *that portion* of Thy bounty which Thou hast bestowed upon us. . . ."

Thus magnificently including the Almighty in his displeasure.

As I write, it is only a week or so since I heard that the Haydenville house may have to be pulled down. All the immediate family are dead, and the younger generation naturally enough have no use for a large rambling house in the main street of a village. But it is a sad thought to me. The house and all it stood for meant a great deal to my mother and father. My father, writing in 1917, describes it thus :

"The holidays between the concert seasons were usually spent among the hills of Massachusetts. I had read and heard much about their particular attractiveness, and now had plenty of opportunity to verify all that had been said and written in praise of country and life in New England.

"Looking back on the period into which those first visits fell, I find it difficult to realise that it is only thirty-seven years since I passed my first summer there. One seemed to breathe the very spirit of the Pilgrim Fathers in the simple, vigorous life of the people in those villages of which Haydenville was one of the prettiest. Founded by, and named after, my wife's maternal ancestors, a family of mechanics who two generations before had built a brass foundry on the banks of the river there, it was a peaceful, quietly flourishing place when I came to know it.

"The main street of the village was a broad avenue of those magnificent elm trees for which the country all about is famous. Set back a few yards from the sidewalk, which not infrequently consisted of wooden planks, and connected with it by plots of grass containing well-cared-for flower beds or else fine specimens of trees—walnut, chestnut or plane—stood the dwelling houses, all in their own grounds. The two most distinguished among them were, not unnaturally, the homes of Josiah Hayden, my wife's grandfather, and Joel his brother. Quite imposing buildings they were, with broad steps up to a portico, the triangular roof of which was supported by four Ionic columns. That these were of wood painted white, and not of marble, did not take away a bit from their stateliness; neither did the houses seem in the least out of place in the simple New England village. You instinctively felt that the Greek portico merely testified to a love in the owners of the beautiful,



The Haydenville House.

From a Snapshot.

independent of surroundings. Outside, there was dignity without pretence to grandeur. Within, there was true comfort in the shape of cosy armchairs, sofas, large fireplaces, wide four-posters, books, pictures in plenty.

"How I remember those patriarchal Sunday afternoons when all the available members of the family would assemble on the verandah, called 'piazza.'* Distributed in groups between the Greek columns, the old people in easy chairs, mostly of the rocking variety, the younger ones on the steps, they would all sing psalms and hymns as in the days of Josiah and Joel, who had already joined the Choir Invisible. Josiah had been a Methodist minister, with a beautiful voice, and the hymns we sang were chiefly favourites of that Church, like *Jerusalem The Golden—Every Hour I Need Thee*.

"Commonplace as some of these unquestionably are from the musical standpoint, it is remarkable how their naïve sincerity invests them with a quality almost amounting to beauty. The devotional artless singing of them, too, in the open air for every passer-by to hear, and in the simplest possible harmonies, was most impressive. Add to that the strange force of mental association, and it is perhaps no wonder that these hymns seem lovely to me to this day."

The feeling of social equality engendered by the mixture of New England independence and Methodist brotherliness which obtained in Haydenville (Aunt Annie was always "Sister Hayden" to the members of her congregation) gave rise to absurd incidents sometimes.

Once, she was sitting on the front verandah with some friends when the noon bell at the factory opposite released the usual stream of workmen, one of whom detached himself from his fellows and marched solemnly up the long red-brick path to the house. Planting himself firmly in front of my astonished relative, he remarked sternly, "Showin' too much petticoat, Sister Hayden!" and marched away again. Since when, "There's a man coming up from the factory!" has always in our family indicated some sweet disorder in the dress.

*And here pronounced "piazzier."

My grandmother and her sister were voracious readers, and used to spend hours devouring all sorts of current literature together, which they would discuss afterwards at great length. These discussions sometimes gave rise to considerable argument and once caused me, at the age of six, to remark to my mother: "Grandy and Aunt Annie do love each other, don't they, Mummy? But I don't think they seem to *like* each other very much."

The name of Matthew Arnold was frequently on their lips. One Sunday they took me to church with them. When the minister gave out his text as from "Matthew" (in the Methodist Church saints were apparently not recognised) I said in a stentorian whisper: "I suppose that's Matthew Arnold, Grandy." This pleased Aunt Annie immensely, because she took a Puckish delight in anything which might shock her much more conventional sister.

There was a time when she had a lovable family living in the back premises of her house—Papa, Mamma and Baby. Papa worked in the factory, Mamma kept house and cooked beautifully for Aunt Annie, and Baby—well, Baby became the talk of the village. As soon as she reached the prattling stage, she had been taken in hand by Aunt Annie who amused herself by teaching the little girl to say long pedantic phrases, like a parrot. When one day a rather prim lady called about some church business, little Edith, with an angelic smile (and, I am sure, in response to a wink from Aunt Ann) suddenly said: "But, Mrs. So-and-So, going to church is not unmitigated felicity!"

After that, "Miss Hayden's baby" became the curiosity and pet of the village.

I recollect vividly another incident which enchanted my aunt, but which luckily did not have the serious consequences it might have had. One summer my parents were accompanied on their visit to Haydenville by one of my father's pupils, Nettie Huxley. A daughter of Professor Huxley, she is by no means one of the least remarkable of that remarkable family. A woman of originality and independence, possessing a robust sense of humour and complete unself-consciousness. She was very young at the time of her American visit. Being about six feet tall, extremely slender and

with commanding features closely resembling those of her august father, she presented an appearance very different from that of the average New Englander of those days. She was devoted to bright colours and charming but unconventional dress. So when she appeared in Haydenville's main street arrayed in a long straight green frock, wearing a tight-fitting green cap with a dashing scarlet quill stuck in it, the local inhabitants looked upon her with some apprehension, as being not quite human.

Under this ebullient exterior, however, she carried a very feminine personality, and was just as easily frightened as any of us.

One fine day, being on a walk by herself among the surrounding hills, she met two men as she was crossing a railway cutting. They looked dirty, fierce, unshaven, and (she thought) very dangerous and undesirable. She was terrified. She could not turn into a side path, because there wasn't one. Inwardly trembling, but valiantly simulating unconcern, she was about to pass them when one asked her the time. That finished her. Convinced that this was the American equivalent of "*Your money or your life!*" she let fly with her long arms, right fist and left fist. Both men were knocked clean off their feet, and went down as if pole-axed.

They were, of course, a couple of factory workers on their way home, and wanted—to know what the time was.

After that, "dear Master" (as Nettie always called my father) besought his pupil to refrain from roaming the countryside unaccompanied, as she had nearly landed both herself and him in jail.

It took "Sister Hayden" a long time to live this pugilistic exhibition down—to her everlasting delight.

From these early memories of America my mind travels forward slowly and luxuriously through the years, stopping to chuckle here and there, as some ridiculous episode comes back to life. What my parents found in Harlem, for instance.

The Harlem of those days was not, needless to say, the modern Harlem of Mr. van Vechten's *Nigger Heaven*, but a dignified and elegant suburb of New York, boasting one of the earliest of those Ladies' Clubs whose descendants now flourish in every city, town and village in America. You must take my word for it that the following description of the efforts to create a home-like atmosphere for the Henschels' recital is authentic. It is worth noting that even forty years ago, the only time the smart women's clubs seemed able to spare for listening to music was eleven o'clock in the morning. A truly horrific hour for the artist and—I should have thought—for the audience as well.

However . . .

"We have just returned from our morning recital at Harlem," writes my mother. "It poured with rain and it took two cabs and an elevated train to get us there; otherwise it was a very charming experience—and a great success, altho' there were only ladies in the audience.

"The stage was arranged to make the place look as homelike (I suppose) as possible. I enclose a list of the things I was able to notice; doubtless there were a good many more.

"In addition to the piano, as much furniture as could be crowded on to the stage, consisting of large and small tables, ditto chairs, writing desk, large couch, enormous ottoman (over which Mr. and Mrs. H. stumbled upon their entrance and exit from the platform.) Arranged on the walls, distributed on the tables and gracefully, carelessly thrown about the room, the following:

- banjo
- boxing gloves
- bicycle
- dish of oranges
- decanter of wine
- tea kettle

chafing dish
pair of gentleman's slippers
fishing basket and rods
hockey clubs
guns
a large flag
smoking table
pedestal with bust
fishing net and oars
stuffed dog
 „ cat
 „ owl (and the Henschels went on singing)
 „ bear's head
tennis racquets
Indian clubs
large ship
on one of the chairs, the morning papers
chess and cribbage box
writing pads
enormous inkstands
many books
writing paper
several small dishes
an enormous lamp (which smelled)
a large clock on the wall
a small clock on the table, which made such a noise I had to
remove it.

fans, foils, pictures, hangings covered the walls.

"This was all I was able to notice during one hour's recital. Had it reached the usual length of $1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs. I doubtless could have made my list longer."

The scene of another story my mother used to like to tell—a story rather against herself—was a hotel dining-room in an American University town where, the evening before, the Henschels had given a recital. They were dining at the usual dinner hour, when the dining-room was full, and so came in for a good deal of politely

concealed attention as they entered. This was especially noticeable among the occupants of a table close to their own, who were evidently having an argument as to whether the quiet couple conversing absorbedly in undertones were, or were not, the stars of the previous evening. Finally, one of the ladies said :

"Well, it looks exactly like *him*; but *she's* not to be compared with Mrs. Henschel!"

Mother was amused at being compared with herself, to her own disadvantage.

Another time, in a town of the Middle West, the negro waiter who had been looking after the hybrid meal they took at five o'clock, before the evening recital, and who had beamed paternally on them all the time they were eating it, said with a broad smile as he pulled back their chairs :

"I hope you'll have a great success to-night. I've been in the show business myself."

They are charming, those negro waiters and car attendants. Perfect manners, often with a real and ready wit. There was, for instance, a certain cloak-room attendant in one of the great New York hotels, whose extraordinary memory for faces brought him something like celebrity. No matter how many men deposited their hats—and it was a huge hotel with a huge clientèle—he never gave a hat-check, but invariably returned the right hat to its right owner. Father and a friend went to lunch at this hotel, purposely to see the phenomenon for themselves. Along with crowds of others they deposited their hats, receiving nothing but a sweet smile in return.

After lunching leisurely, they sauntered to the cloak-room and were duly presented each with his own headgear. Father exclaimed, "That's really amazing! Now do tell me, how do you know that's my hat?"

Quick as a flash came the answer : "I don't know it's your hat, sir. I only know it's the hat you gave me!"

Sceptics may remark that he had probably given the same answer many times before, but it is a pleasant repartee none the less

Then there was the Affair of the Strange Wagner performance. There have been many less conventional interpretations of that master's works, such as, for example, that of the enterprising conductor of a small-town amateur orchestral society who embarked upon the *Tristan* Overture for the opening of his winter season. "Ladies and gentlemen," he said at the first rehearsal, "we will take our time over familiarising ourselves with this glorious but difficult piece. So let us begin by playing it through quietly—and *leaving out the accidentals.*"

The queerest Wagnerian performance I ever heard was at a little supper party at the house of Mr. Henry Wolfsohn (my parents' genial impresario) in New York. The French violinist, Henri Marteau, was there, I remember, and Alexandre Siloti, one of the last pupils of Liszt. Suddenly, through the hum of pleasant conversation we became aware of the *Ride of the Valkyries* motif being projected upon the atmosphere in a hoarse and raucous *sotto voce*, apparently from nowhere.

In answer to our enquiring glances, Mr. Wolfsohn said: "That's my parrot. He's very fond of the *Ride of the Valkyries*, and often sings it, but only when he's upside down. Come and see."

To the accompaniment of the rapidly rising crescendos, we went into the next room. There, sure enough, was a large grey parrot hanging from the roof of his cage in a completely inverted position, by now fairly bellowing his *Ho-yo-to-ho's*, at the same time fixing us with the baleful and unwinking stare so characteristic of these majestic birds. This parrot did not whistle, as parrots generally do, but used "la-ta-ta-ta," just as a rather hoarse singer might, and finishing on a tremendous shriek. Quite in tune, though!

As we gazed, convulsed with laughter, upon this peculiar sight, the bird gazed back. It looked fiendish. No wonder a near relative of mine is convinced that parrots are inhabited by the departed spirits of particularly wicked old men.

It was during a later visit to America that, with my father, I spent a memorable evening in the Boston house of Thomas Bailey Aldrich, one of the outstanding American novelists of his time.

At the age of eighteen, the fact that one sees a name on a book or in a review, and hears it casually mentioned in public places, adds a particular spice to meeting the bearer of it face to face.

This occasion was a great contrast to the evening at the Wolfsohns. No eccentric parrot, no foreign musicians, no cigar-smoke, no sartorial informalities. Instead, an exquisite Georgian house. Boston, the old Boston, is full of such houses—mellow red brick, graceful white porticos, green shutters. Whole plane-shaded squares of them. (O Washington Square!) Chestnut-candled streets of them. (O Mount Vernon, Chestnut Street!) The ghost of Jane Austen would assuredly be more at home here than anywhere in England, alas.

The inside of the Aldrich's house matched its fine exterior. A white panelled room, leaf-green brocade curtains, a big log fire, flowers everywhere. I was filling my youthful eye with all the graciousness in this drawing-room, when a little buzz of voices by the door sent my glance in that direction—to be met by a vision so startlingly "belonging" that I had a sudden misgiving as to whether I was awake or asleep and dreaming.

A woman.

A woman who was the living embodiment of all the romantic heroines of fiction. A woman more than common tall, her graceful head royally set upon splendid shoulders which rose, rounded and flawless, like white sea birds above the foam of lace that spilled itself about her gown. A white gown, all white, stiff and full and opulent. And tucked into the front of the low bodice, one great red rose.

O Princess Flavia! O fairy princess through the ages! O impossibly ravishing she!

Such was my impression of the Baroness von Hutten in the Year of Our Lord, 1901.

Seriously, though, she was almost incredibly lovely and vital. I remember thinking, and indeed I have thought so ever since, how wonderful to be as fascinating as that. How easy life must be. To excite buzzes by doors at one's every entrance. To carry with one an unexpressed assurance that the party may now begin!

Her voice was as lovely as her looks, rather low-pitched but full of life and fun, and she was quite obviously enjoying herself very much. How shamelessly and enchantingly she flirted with my father! With what a gesture she presented him, as she said good-night, with the rose from her gown. How dashingly he played up to her. How gay, how charming in the fullest sense of the word, was this whole evening!

Not a whit less lovely was a very *old* lady whom I met a few days later, when Mrs. Maude Howe Elliott took Father and me to visit her mother, Mrs. Julia Ward Howe. This remarkable woman, born in 1819, was (says the *Encyclopædia Britannica*) "one of the most active and versatile personalities of her day. She studied, wrote, lectured on philosophy, advocated Abolition, preached in Unitarian pulpits, was one of the organisers of the American Women's Suffrage Association, and a zealous worker for the advancement of women, and for prison reform."

She won almost world-wide fame by her stirring Civil War poem, *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, and it gained her the honour of being the only woman elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

This poem, scribbled down in the darkness of her tent while visiting a camp near Washington, was published in the *Atlantic Monthly* in February, 1862. Sung to the tune of "John Brown's Body," it became—and still is—one of the most popular marching songs in America. It is indeed a Battle Hymn in the highest sense, and worth recalling in these days of vicious Hymns of Hate sung in the name of petty, perverted "Leaders."

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword;
His truth is marching on.

I have seen him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded him an altar in the evening dews and damp;
I have read his righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps;
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel, writ in burnished rows of steel;
As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal;
Let the Hero born of woman crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on.

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
 He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat;
 O be swift, my soul, to answer him; be jubilant, my feet!
 Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
 With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me;
 As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
 While God is marching on.

He is coming like the glory of the morning on the wave;
 He is wisdom to the mighty, He is succour to the brave;
 So the world shall be His footstool, and the soul of time His slave:
 Our God is marching on."

One would naturally visualise the writer of those stirring lines, the bearer of all those impressive distinctions, as a somewhat formidable and forbidding personality, rather masculine as to voice, an eye of "terrible aspect," and intimidating manner. . . .

Instead, a Tanagra figure. Dressed from head to foot, like the Baroness von Hutten, in white. Ivory-white, chalk-white, warm white, cold white—all these mingled in the harmonious medley of silk, filmy woollen draperies and lace which had apparently blown themselves about her. Only in the beautiful face was there a faint wild-rose flush.

I don't remember many details of the general conversation, but I do very clearly remember that—I was going to say the old lady, but you can't possibly speak of her as "the old lady"—that Mrs. Howe told us she had lately begun taking lessons in Greek. She said she thought it was quite ridiculous to have reached her time of life (she was then eighty-two) without knowing Greek, so she was jolly well going to learn it now.

As, in middle age, I look back upon this enchanting creature, I feel hope and encouragement for the future. For on that afternoon in Boston I think both she and I refuted the sentiment expressed by the poet Thomas Bastard :

"Age is deformed, youth unkind;

We scorn their bodies, they our mind."

We knew better!

PART II.

THE HOUSE THAT WAITED.

PART II.—THE HOUSE THAT WAITED.

CHAPTER 1.

The house that waited when I was a child.
The fire that crackled for me on the stone,

My father's ear for all I had to sing,
My mother's ear for all I had to say.

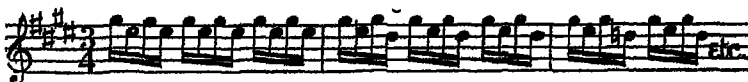
From "*The Musician's Child*," by Mrs. J. L. Garvin

IT would be impossible to write about my father and mother without saying a good deal about myself; because I was part of their "perfect diapason," a factor in the development of their two personalities.

In spite of their many outside activities, their lives were centred around their only child. My father was away on a concert tour when I was born, but on that day his diary is scrawled all over in blue pencil with, "Helen Henriette born," and from almost the first word I spoke he seems to have noted down all I said that could be considered the least out of the ordinary.

I am told on the highest authority that I *whistled*—in tune—before I could speak, creating a mild sensation when indulging in this pastime in my perambulator. It is probably not true, but it makes a story!

I certainly have inherited my father's talent for whistling. We often had whistling matches together, our *tour de force* being the Bach Violin Sonata in E major. When it came to the long passage beginning



we used to get really worked up, whistling away with our eyes very solemnly fixed on each other's faces, to see how long we could keep up those awful descending semitones.

When I was very small, my father and mother and I had a special good-night kiss which was known as a "tri-kiss." This was a musical affair. Our three mouths were pressed together while the

sound of a triad emerged through our closed lips; father hummed the tonic, my mother the third, and I the dominant. A fine and special good-night! Sometimes we made it even finer and more special by singing two or three chords instead of only one.

When I had emerged from the nursery-rhyme stage, my favourite bedtime song used to be *The Two Grenadiers*. I don't suppose my father in all his career had a more enthralled and enthusiastic audience for that song than I was, sitting by the fire in my nightgown eating biscuits and drinking milk. On the other hand, I fear that I sometimes took performances by the Henschels decidedly casually. One of the most popular duets in their repertoire was a lovely Italian barcarolle of my father's composition, called *Gondoliera*. The word was often on their lips while making programmes, and one day I asked: "What is the *Gondoliera*, please?" "Haven't you ever heard us sing it, Helen?" said my mother, and when I answered "No," adding politely that I would much like to, the pair of them proceeded then and there to give a full-dress performance for my benefit, with Father at the piano. The song begins: "Vedi, che bella sera," a line which continually recurs. When the last lovely note had died away, the two performers turned expectantly to their audience from whom they usually received rapturous recognition—only to be met by a somewhat absent-minded expression, and the laconic remark: "I saw Sarah when I was out yesterday." Sarah was a recently departed parlour-maid who had been a great friend of mine; hence my conviction that the *Gondoliera* must be all about her.

I can well remember my first efforts at playing the piano, standing on tip-toes and reaching up to the keyboard in a determined attempt to reproduce that sad ballad beginning:



I am rather surprised that I should have hit on so tragic a song, because I was uncomfortably soft-hearted almost up to adolescence, so much so that I could never bear to hear my parents sing any of their sad songs. *Der Leiermann*, for instance, sent me into floods of tears. This peculiarity severely cramped my mothers' style in her attempts to tell me Bible stories. "Were *all* Joseph's brothers nice and kind to him?" is not a helpful question at the outset of the story of Joseph and his brethren.

Among those of my father's diaries, which he gave me not long before his death, I found a touching little book of "Helen's Sayings," and the *Aunt Abbie* incident is quoted in considerable detail. If I here repeat what he wrote, it is for two reasons only. Firstly, because it is typical of his devotion to his child. Secondly, because it may interest parents of musical children to see at how early an age that musicality may manifest itself.

"Helen is very fond of playing the piano," my father writes. "Whenever she comes into my room she asks, 'Daddy, shan't I play you something?' And then she tries to find the first note of the melody (generally in C major). Then a suitable bass for it. To-day (aged 2½) she began the tune *Go tell Aunt Abbie* in G major, and quickly discovered the fifth G-D as the proper bass for it. Full of joy she turned to me and said: 'You see, Daddy, when I play the song like that, I must play this bass.' Thereupon I let her play the tune in F, and said: 'Now find the bass for that.' In the shortest possible time she had found it. What strikes me as the most extraordinary thing in her, however, is her sense of rhythm. In the phrase



she invariably holds out the dotted crotchet (*) its full three beats."

A sense of the importance of the musical profession seems to have been mine from a very early age. Dipping at random into the book of paternal pride, I find:

"Helen, sitting at the piano and singing. 'But Daddy, don't

talk so loud! When I am being a musician you mustn't talk so loud.'"

I am glad to see from the same book that I was able to hold my own, before I was three, against one of those abominable "tests of affection" in which so many parents seem to take a fiendish delight.

"Helen was given some honey for breakfast this morning," wrote my father. "Directly she was beginning to eat it I said good-bye to her, to go to my study. Oh, Daddy, don't go away yet!"

Daddy: "But you've got some honey now, and I'm sure you'd rather have the honey than Daddy, wouldn't you?"

Helen: "No, Daddy, I love you better than the honey."

Daddy: "Well, then, Helen, would you rather have Daddy now *without* the honey, or would you rather have the honey and not Daddy?"

Helen (without any hesitation whatever): "Well now, I'll tell you what, Daddy. First you go away, and when I've eaten up the honey, then you come back."

I think he deserved that—but what dreadful opportunism in one so young!

Here are two more stories, one musical:

Helen: "Oh, Daddy, please play me something by Beethoven."

To test her, I played *Jerusalem* from *St. Paul*, whereupon Helen, listening intently, smiles and says: "Oh, Daddy, but that is out of the middle of *St. Paul*. You know, I'd rather listen to *St. Paul* than anything!"

And the second story—not musical:

Scene in a lift, Hotel Metropole:

1st Passenger: "Second floor, please!"

2nd Passenger: "Fifth floor."

3rd Passenger: "No. 605."

Helen: "25 Gloucester Road, Regent's Park."

When I was five years old I started piano lessons. My first teacher was a delightful woman named Miss Levinson. Dark, vivacious, pretty, she always carried with her an exciting scent of roses. It was Atkinson's "White Rose," I remember, and I think

that was what started in me my still incorrigible weakness for fine perfumes. By the time I was eight I was playing Mozart and early Beethoven sonatas by heart. Before I was nine I played the piano part in Haydn's *Gipsy* Trio as a surprise for my father's birthday. His diary says :

"Helen—God bless her—plays Haydn Trio in G with Edmund and Maurice, to celebrate my birthday. Tademas, Burne-Jones, etc., there."

About this time, my parents being engaged for a concert tour in Italy, I was sent with my Nanny to stay with the Rubens family. I usually spent such times with my grandmother and grandfather, or sometimes my grandfather or my uncle came to stay at our house. Never would my parents leave their precious fledgling without a *man* to protect her and the maids from possible burglars, fire, battle, murder or sudden death. For some reason, however, Grandmama could not take us this time and neither male relative could conveniently accept the position of temporary watch-dog. So I entered upon some of the happiest weeks of my often very lonely childhood.

The Rubens' were a very happy and united family, and—which excited my childish envy—a large one. Three boys, Paul, Walter and Herbert, and a charming daughter, Margaret (now Mrs. Burlison).

The family friendship went right back to my father's childhood, when at the age of about eleven he had been madly in love with Mrs. Rubens' older sister, then a beautiful young woman of twenty. The mantle of my father's youthful ardour seems to have fallen on me in those very early days; for to my babyish but already intensely musical mind, Paul—and to a lesser extent, Walter—seemed only one degree removed from the archangels. Paul could play pretty well anything on the piano, and even in his first days at Winchester was beginning to compose charming light tunes and the clever words to match them, by which he afterwards became so well known and deservedly popular. He had a delicious sense of humour, quite irrepressible. During the Christmas holidays, which coincided with my visit, the sounds of mirth and merriment

were never still, not to mention harp, sackbut and timbrel. (Walter and Herbert were learning the violin and cello, and Mrs. Rubens was a very fine amateur pianist.)

After the rigid regularity of my life at home, beginning with half-an-hour's practising on the music-room piano before eight o'clock breakfast and hearing only the most classical music, I felt myself as nearly in Paradise as I can ever imagine possible, and Paul's music sowed in me the seeds of that catholicity of taste which I am thankful to say has never ceased to grow, and which enabled me when still very young to realise—as my father once put it years later—that *good* music is good whether it be in the lightest musical comedy vein or the greatest classical, and that *bad* music is bad in the same way, whatever its origin.

How infinitely preferable is "good bad music" to "bad good music!"

Paul used to play and sing all the latest popular songs, almost as soon as they came out. Those were the palmy days of Albert Chevalier, and I can remember Mrs. Rubens' horror when she discovered nine-year-old me singing *Knocked 'em in the Old Kent Road* from beginning to end, in a strong Cockney accent, accompanying myself on the piano. The dear woman really thought that Father and Mother would be shocked when they became aware of this lapse from Bach and Beethoven. Instead, of course, they were quite enchanted and made me sing it on every possible occasion, before all sorts of distinguished musicians, father joining lustily in the chorus!

Paul, like all children, adored my father and as he grew older he used seriously to worry lest Father should despise his branching into the light side of music instead of following in the classical footsteps of his mother; for, technically, Paul could have done anything he liked with the piano. He had perfect "piano hands"—strong, delicate and nervous—and a natural ease which was the envy of many a student struggling with Czerny and Clementi.

Possibly this misgiving may have been engendered by a notable injunction from the Rubens' Nanny when a visit from my father was announced

"Now, Master Paul, you must be a good boy. Mr. 'Enschel sings in the Halbert 'All."

So far from despising Paul's music, Father enjoyed it to the full and rejoiced in Paul's great success.

The Rubens children always got up some sort of theatricals when the boys were home. The earliest I remember consisted of scenes from *Alice in Wonderland*, when Paul and his life-long friend, Nigel Playfair, gave a colossal performance of the Tweedledum and Tweedledee battle scene. I think that pretty well all the saucepans and fire-irons and coal hods in the well-stocked kitchen had been requisitioned for it; and when, only a few days before his death, I saw Sir Nigel play Cæsar in *Androcles and the Lion*, he was no funnier—extraordinarily funny though he was—than when playing Tweedledee with Paul in Pembridge Villas, at the age of fifteen.

The glamour surrounding Paul's histrionics, his handsome face, but above all the innate kindness of his character, that kindness which drew him to include a small plain child—and a girl-child at that—into his charmed and charming circle, kindled in my heart a fiery devotion which caused me, at the age of eight, to write him an impassioned love-letter. This document, I need scarcely say, was never sent, but is still in the possession of my Nanny.

How silly are those people who glibly say that we don't feel as deeply when we are small as when we are grown up. I can remember, and indeed still feel, the misery and desolation that were mine when two girls a few years older than myself used to show me in unmistakable manner that I was entirely *de trop*. Thus Paul's kindness meant all the more to me.

Once, when Paul was quite a little boy, my father took him to see Tree play Falstaff. Tree was extremely slim in those days and had to be extensively padded for the part. Or *enlarged*, rather. He had a beautiful arrangement of tummy-plus-legs on a sort of wire frame, which was much less cumbersome than padding. On this particular occasion something "went wrong with the works," and the tummy began slowly but surely to descend. Tummy and Mighty Calves lay crumpled round the slender ankles before any-

thing could be done about it. During the laughter-laden few minutes that elapsed while the curtain was lowered, an agitated little voice was heard saying: "Mr. Henschel, Mr. Henschel, will the poor man *ever* be able to show his face in public again?" Sympathy before mirth for Paul, in the face of what seemed to him more tragic than comic.

As he grew up, the generosity and goodness of his nature grew deeper, and so more and more hidden. Whereas the funny side became so much part of his every-day life that he could hardly open his mouth without saying something more or less absurd. *A propos* the popular song, *Every morn I bring thee Violets*, he once plaintively said to me:

"I can't see anything particularly pleasant in the idea. In fact, I think it'd be an awful bore to be wakened every morning by one's man murmuring, 'Your shaving-water, sir—and a few violets.'"

And there was the Sunday supper-party in the country when Paul and his undergraduate friends appeared in faultless dinner jackets, but with pink cotton ties instead of black ones, and bearing an immense salmon upon whose silver back they had persuaded a willing and admiring cook to emblazon the query: "Where is Gluckstein?" in large letter of cucumber.

After Paul left Oxford he became entirely absorbed in the life of the theatre, and thus developed the habit of late to bed and late to rise. Nothing would move him from his bed till just before lunch. When a cistern burst in the roof of their house in Kensington Palace Gardens, immediately above his room, members of the family running in to rouse him and save him from a possible watery grave, found him lying peacefully in bed, holding up an umbrella, while water poured in through the ceiling!

When a visit from the vicar—on urgent business—was announced at about ten minutes to one, Paul wailed: "If *he* suffers from insomnia, that's no reason not to let other people sleep."

But he was anything but lazy. He worked with extraordinary rapidity. For instance, George Edwardes wanted an extra number for one of his new shows, and asked Paul to write and deliver it

within a fortnight. Realising that he had plenty of time, Paul promptly forgot all about it until two weeks later, when he was dining with the Burlisons. In the middle of dinner "the guvnor" rang up and asked Paul to go round and play him the new song. Nothing daunted, Paul leaped into a hansom. By the time it had conveyed him to Shaftesbury Avenue he had produced music and a lyric which caused Edwardes to slap him on the back and congratulate him on "the best thing you've ever done, my boy!" So far, so good. But when Paul got back to the Burlisons and they wanted to hear the song, he found he'd forgotten every single note of it.

Accordingly, he wrote a brand-new one, had it orchestrated and punctually delivered—and George Edwardes never knew the difference.

The delightful song, *I Like You in Velvet*, sophisticated though it is, owes its being to the small Burlison boy's promotion from petticoat to knickers. Again Paul was at his sister's house, "messaging about" on the piano, when the baby was brought in, proudly arrayed in his first knickers. Absorbed in his music, Paul paid no attention to this phenomenon until the proud mamma complained:

"Well, I do think you might take some notice of your nephew's beautiful new knickers!"

And to the baby: "Uncle Paul can't really love you, can he? He didn't notice," etc., etc.

Paul, not taking his hands off the piano, replied: "Of course I love you. It doesn't matter what you're dressed in. . . . I like you in frocks . . . in trousers . . . I like you . . . in . . ." and so he drifted into the charming trifle which, inimitably sung by Maurice Farkoa, contributed so much to the success of the musical comedy *Lady Madcap*.

It took him half-an-hour to produce words, tune, and accompaniment.

Paul's death in 1917, at the lamentably early age of forty-two, put out the light for innumerable friends and robbed English musical comedy of a brilliant lyric-writer, an enchanting composer. We had to wait a longish time for Mr. Noel Coward, whom I regard as his direct successor in those fields.

CHAPTER 2.

It was a red-letter day for me when my father would take me to school, and an even redder-letter day for my Nanny when she *didn't* have to take me. She walked to and from that school, at least a mile and a half away, four times a day, for five days a week, for thirty-six weeks in the year, for five years.

Having had his morning walk, either with me or in going to see my grandparents, my father would settle down to his teaching, sometimes giving twelve or thirteen lessons a day. This excessive number was generally only for a few weeks in the summer "season," when quantities of Americans visiting London would improve the shining hour and their prestige as singers or teachers by having some lessons with him.

These aspirants to fame provided comic relief now and then. "One morning," wrote my father, "I found among my mail a large advertising sheet, headed in big letters: MISS X.Y.Z., The Great Californian Something-or-other. (I think it was the usual 'Nightingale'.)"

"I have noticed that many atlases contain charts which illustrate the comparative heights of the mountains and church steeples of the world. Well, below this 'Nightingale' was a similar kind of chart, heavily embossed, referring not to the heights of mountains and cathedrals, but to the voices of the famous prima donnas of the world. Down at the bottom was a poor A flat; against it, the name of the unfortunate female who could boast of nothing higher. Then came a B natural, with another celebrated name opposite it. Then a C sharp, and so on, until the apex was reached with the A flat above top C, and against that wonderful achievement was placed in red emblazoned letters, twice as big as those of the poor rivals, the name of MISS X.Y.Z. Wondering why this valuable document should have been sent to me, I opened the letter accompanying it. It was headed, in print, by the words: MISS

X.Y.Z., Mr. A., Manager. The letter, written from New York, ran as follows:—

„Dear Sir,

MISS X.Y.Z., the great soprano whose fame on this continent has no doubt reached you before this, is sailing for England on Saturday fortnight, to put herself under your tuition. I am sure I need not point out to you the advantage which will accrue to you by her so doing. I should be much obliged if you would meet her on the arrival of the steamer at Liverpool. In a few weeks I expect to be in London myself, when I will call and consult with you as to the best way in which to place her before the British Public in a *chaste and dignified manner*.”

“Chaste and dignified” has been a cliché in our family ever since.

Father’s days were not occupied wholly with teaching. My brain, accustomed as it is to the ideas of speed and rush which obtain to-day, sags a little in the face of entries like these—taken at random—from my father’s diary for a few days in 1891.*

February 28th. Leave with Lily, via Calais for Cologne. Service in Cathedral. Very impressive.

March 1st. Theatre. *Martha*. Rather good.

March 2nd. Leave for Hanover.

March 3rd. Recital.

March 4th. Recital in Magdeburg.

March 5th. Recital in Brunswick. Party afterwards.

March 6th. To Dresden.

March 7th. To Görlitz. Recital. Party afterwards.

March 9th. To Frankfurt. Recital. Party afterwards.

March 11th. Recital in Danzig.

March 13th. Recital in Königsberg.

And so on, for weeks at a time. “Recital,” one must remember, involved for him the singing of about fifteen songs and duets, and the accompanying of at least twenty.

*Father’s diaries, though extremely brief in those early years, are beautifully uncompromising and direct. One entry, during a visit to Paris, reads: “Salon. Horrid. Comédie Française. Perfect.”

As well as these recitals, my parents were constantly engaged to sing in oratorio and other choral works. Throughout his career my blameless parent was particularly identified with the part of the Devil: Satan in Stanford's *Eden*, Lucifer in Sullivan's *Golden Legend*, and, above all, Mephistopheles in Berlioz' *Faust*. To this day, people constantly say to me: "Nobody could be as gleefully fiendish as your dear father when he sang, *Dear Katherine . . . at thy window*."

Hans von Bülow bore out this opinion when he once said to Father, after hearing someone else sing the Berlioz Mephistopheles, "That was a triumph for *you*, my dear Henschel!"

All my childhood recollections are of pursuing my own carefully tabulated life, with perfect regularity, while my parents moved in a sort of kaleidoscopic round. When they were at home I was perfectly happy. When they went away I was perfectly miserable.

It is not good to be an only child. Luckily for me I was able to read music very easily. Father gave me permission to take music from his library—so long as I always put it back!—and so I spent hours at the piano when my day's work was finished (a pretty hard day's work—I was allowed no unoccupied time at all except at week-ends), reading Bach and Beethoven, and Schubert, whose heavenly melodies were a never-ending source of joy. Chamber-music, too, fascinated me, and I would hammer away at things like the Brahms piano quartets, even the great F minor quintet, with enormous optimism and enthusiasm.

I must have been very funny over songs, though. My friend Reinhold von Warlich, that fine singer, was never tired of telling me how he heard me (aged thirteen) sing and play Brahms' *O Liebliche Wangen* with the utmost passion and abandon, in a high and shrill voice. He said it was one of the most comical things he ever heard; certainly his imitation of it was. An ecstatic love song like *O Liebliche Wangen* could not possibly be intended to issue from the lips of anything female. However, small matters of that nature never deterred me, and I owe all my deepest-rooted knowledge of music to those lonely evenings in the music room at Bedford Gardens. I was not more than ten when I began them,

and they went on with increasing enthusiasm and at increasing length until my mother's death when I was nineteen.

My love for chamber-music was greatly stimulated by the visit to London one summer of the Kneisel Quartet of Boston. This quartet was not so well known outside America as some others, because all four of its members were also members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and so were free to travel for only part of the year. But, looking back, I cannot remember to have heard more perfect quartet playing since those happy "Kneisel days."* Kneisel himself, leader of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, was a sensitive and charming person; Otto Roth, the second violin, a crazy and lovable buffoon. Why is it that one member of every string quartet is always a crazy and lovable buffoon? Otto Roth was always known to his friends as Utter Rot, and if any slight *contretemps* occurred—gravy being spilled on the table cloth or a glass of wine being upset—the rest of the quartet would reproachfully exclaim: "But Roth!" as a matter of course, whether he had been guilty or not.

Then there was Svečenski, gentle, enigmatic, very Slavonic in temperament, playing his viola like an angel; and Alwin Schröder the cellist, I think one of the finest cellists I ever heard in a quartet. He was also rather a quiet person, but crammed with humour which manifested itself in a delightful sort of deprecatory manner, and was quite irresistible.

The visit of these four artists was a great happiness to us all, and being allowed to listen to them working I began to realise at a very early age the unique pleasure of hearing chamber-music as chamber-music—in the intimacy of a room.

I have always envied Mr. Montgomery Sears of Boston, who in his beautiful music room, on Commonwealth Avenue, used to have the Kneisels to play to him and a dozen or so friends every Tuesday evening after dinner. This is one of the first things I would do if I were a millionaire. No radiogram or hand-made gramophone in the world ever make up for the actual presence

*But even that perfection is, in my opinion, now matched by the Griller Quartet.

of four artists making music for me and my friends *at a particular moment*.

My mother wrote to a friend in Boston at this time :

"The brightest spot of this season has been the visit of the Kneisels. We were able to get a charming little house for them in Bedford Gardens, a stone's throw from us; and when George was not with them, they were with us, sitting in the garden smoking and chatting, practising in the music room, or drinking untold bottles of wine with George in the dining-room until late at night. This last sounds very dissipated, but the feast of reason and flow of soul greatly outweighed the material indulgences! George so delighted in these four sympathetic souls that he found his daily happiness to consist in laying all he could offer at their feet, so to speak, and they repaid him with a gratitude and devotion that was most touching. Their whole visit to London was like a triumphal procession and they went home exceedingly happy and full of enthusiasm for their next year's visit.

"While they were in London we really lived only for and with them, their presence was like food and drink to George. And their music! They were ready to play for him at any hour of the day or night, and anything he wished to hear. His absolute happiness and joy with them was something touching to see. He usually never takes a step from the house without my knowledge, and I can scarcely drive him to his club. But during the K.'s visit he would slink out of the house at odd hours of the day and evening with a box of cigars or a couple of bottles of wine in his pocket, and if Helen and I ever came in and found him missing, we would run to 'the Boys' House' and there we would find our dog sitting on the doorstep, betraying his master's presence within. It was a daily delight to me to see George in his almost childlike happiness."

Tempi passati! Those spacious days of music are gone, but let us pray they may yet return in happier times.

CHAPTER 3.

Musing on spacious days brings to mind people of the same quality. The superb figure of that great poet-preacher, or perhaps I should say preacher-poet, Stopford Brooke, flashes inevitably into my mind. Here was indeed a glorious man.

Endowed with unusual physical beauty, of great stature and magnificent carriage, to these external attributes he added his eloquence in the pulpit. The greatest cynic, hearing him preach, could not fail to carry away some of his unshakeable faith in the Love of God through the love of mankind. It was this doctrine which he preached with passion throughout his long life.

My father first heard him in the 'eighties, in the old Bedford Chapel.

"The picture," he wrote, "which presented itself to my eyes as I entered the chapel stands before me now as clear and luminous as it did then.

"It was a lovely Spring morning. A broad shaft of sunlight pierced the religious dimness of the sanctuary crowded with worshippers, over the heads of whom it fell straight upon the pulpit, and in the pulpit there stood as magnificent a man as I had ever beheld in my life. In a voice full of emotion, and wonderfully capable of modulation, these words rang out through the deep stillness: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, thou that stonest them that are sent unto thee. . . ." I stood spell-bound. Not a word of the beautiful sermon, uttered with rare eloquence, escaped me. It was dramatic to a degree, but never even verging on the theatrical. Sunday after Sunday I went to sit at the feet of this great poet and preacher. . . ."

Shortly afterwards the two met at the house of a mutual friend, and there began that friendship which was to be one of the bright lights in our lives and which ended only with Stopford Brooke's death, full of years but unimpaired in mental and physical vigour, in 1916.

My earliest recollection of him is decidedly of the brighter side of his nature. I was about five years old and full of the desire for self-expression so natural in children. In me, it took the form of literary aspiration, besides musical, and I was always trying to write fairy-tales as well as musical compositions in F sharp major. (I have often wondered since why I had this penchant for black keys.) Mr. Brooke was delighted to find a child with "literary leanings," and set me to write an essay, the subject of which was the first meeting of a man who had never seen a woman with a woman who had never seen a man. He said that he had given this essay to each of his daughters to write, and had been extremely amused by their reactions to the subject. A startling subject, perhaps, for the very young, but that was just the sort of thing Mr. Brooke enjoyed. Much later, I revelled in seeing him laugh with almost fiendish but certainly very human glee at many an unclerical joke.

I have been told that he was particularly amused—and rather struck—with the point I made in the famous essay. I caused the woman to soliloquize in this direction, when confronted with her first sight of a man: "What a funny old *woman*! She has hair under her chin as well as on her head." (Of course I, with my father's image always as my ideal of male perfection, would never think of a man without a beard.)

So many pictures of Stopford Brooke and so many aspects of his character arise in my mind as I think of him. I have spent many happy hours in the study at the very top of his house in Manchester Square. His rooms were reached after climbing endless flights of stairs, but had that house been as high as the Empire State Building the climb would still have been worth while. In Stopford Brooke's study, full of books and bright flowers and the scent of cigar-smoke, one could always find laughter and gladness, or comfort and advice if life had momentarily gone awry. To hear his stimulating talk about literature, painting and politics, yet so close to life, made one feel that over his door should have been written: "Abandon sham and pretentiousness all ye who enter here!" He was nearly fifty years older than I, but I never felt any sense of discrepancy.

The year before my mother's death Mr. Brooke and his daughter, Evelyn, came to stay at a cottage in the Scottish Highlands, near the one in which we were spending a few weeks. They were constantly with us, and I particularly remember one afternoon when my father and mother were making music for us. Mr. Brooke asked them to sing the scene from *Elijah* in which Elijah raises the widow's son from the dead. They had sung this dramatic duet hundreds of times before. But this time, after my father's unforgettable delivery of the line:

Now behold thy son liveth!

my mother burst into tears, quite overcome by the beauty of it.

I can see that funny, ugly school room as clearly now as then; Father at the piano, Mother being comforted by Stopford Brooke—who, I think, was not far from tears himself—and Father looking up in surprise at her tears, laughing gently. And outside, the hills and the sunshine and the sound of the river.

But to go back to early days.

About 1890 we had settled into the house on Campden Hill which was to be our home until my mother's death in 1901. It was a delicious old house, one-storied, and standing in a garden. A proper garden, with a mulberry tree, a pink horse-chestnut, a birch tree (unusual, I think, in London) and a huge weeping ash, in the shade of which we used to have meals in the summer. For the rest, there was a lawn bordered with flowers and flowering shrubs, all very informal and countrified and rather wild.

Why do shrubberies always seem to evoke all the *comfortable* associations of Victorian days? Along with glazed chintzes, shaded lamps, hot baths in tubs in front of big glowing fires? It may be that shrubberies were such lovely places to play in, producing the same indefinable feeling of being protected and comforted and loved, which is one of the most precious secrets of a happy childhood. I doubt if chromium plate, formal gardens, electric light and h. & c. in all bedrooms can ever produce quite the same reaction. This doubt is confirmed by my children, who always rejoice in having had a taste of the 1880-ish atmosphere in the days when we all spent our holidays with my mother-in-law, Mrs.

Claughton, at Worcester. Christmas and Easter were eagerly looked forward to. We were met at the station by a *fly*. Yes, there really were such antiquated vehicles still to be seen in Worcester, and, I should imagine, in most Cathedral towns. Even to-day there is a gentleman in the town who advertises a *shillibear* for hire. The children preferred the fly to a taxi, because the measured clip-clop of the ancient horse belonged completely to Worcester and all the happiness that Worcester implied. They often recall their joy in these and similar recollections, even to the smoking of the night nursery fire when it was first lit, the dim candle-light, and the odd performance of hymn tunes by the Cathedral chimes.

My birthday falls in May, so that my birthday parties often began in the garden, though on these occasions the shrubbery was given a miss on account of party frocks, and more decorous proceedings like Puss-in-the Corner took its place. I can see now, among many others, the fairy-like figure of little Viola Tree, generally in a very short velvet tunic bordered with fur, her bright hair in a flame about her face. And Viola Taylor, now Mrs. J. L. Garvin, looking exactly like a Botticelli. Both seemed to me all that was exquisite and unattainable, I myself being a plain child with an unlimited capacity for hero-worship and an impassioned sense of beauty.

These parties were presided over by my Nanny, and no book of reminiscences that I write could be complete without a tribute to her. I think everybody who has the good fortune to include a Nanny in their family will agree that there is nobody like them. My Nanny came to us when I was two-and-a-half years old and she was sixteen, in Berlin, when my parents were singing there. What I should have done without her in my often lonely childhood, my father and mother away on concert tours, I cannot imagine. Strong, mentally and physically, gay, full of resource, fierce when necessary, with a golden heart and unshakeable loyalty, nobody could have been more ideal as a friend and companion to a small sensitive creature. In those very early days she was "Anna" to us all, but soon she became "Nanny." And although she has



"Nanny," with Helen.

From a Photograph.

actually been "Mrs. Holmes" for many years, and is a widowed lady of leisure with a house of her own, she is Nanny the one and only to all who know her. Now, at seventy odd, she looks far younger than many women of fifty, and will walk anybody's head off so long as she doesn't have to hurry. Her sayings and her doings, her prancings off to Italy all by herself, her learning languages in her spare time ("I want to learn seven by the time I'm seventy," she said*) and, above all, her character and steadfastness, are the joy of our lives.

Nanny, I salute you. May you live for ever!

The house in Bedford Gardens, Campden Hill, boasted a spare room, and we often had friends to stay.

Among its first occupants was my father's mother, whose visit was not without alarums and excursions. One bright morning, for instance, she sallied forth into Kensington High Street without saying a word to anyone, in order to buy presents for us; these took the form of favourite edibles such as it had been her joy to shower upon us at all hours of the day when we stayed with her at Dresden.

Consternation burst upon the family when it was discovered that "Grossel"—who couldn't speak one word of English apart from "yes" and "no"—was missing. Father guessed at once what must have happened, for hounds straining at the leash were as naught to his mother when determined to forage, however unnecessarily, for her young. He immediately set out in anxious pursuit. Sure enough, half-way up Church Street he met the dear old lady hung about with parcels like the White Knight, beaming all over, and entirely impervious to his affectionate scoldings.

When she proudly displayed fruit, chocolates and other dainties with which to furnish our already groaning sideboard, we asked her how on earth she had managed to make the shop people understand her.

"Oh, it was quite easy," replied the pretty old lady in her equally pretty low voice. "I shouted 'Yes!' or 'No!' as loud as I could, until I got everything I wanted."

*And she has! (1940).

She had an attractive, very youthful laugh which, constantly evoked by the happiness she felt in her son's company, made this unaffected and naïve old lady a human being of rare charm. Her anxiety to be helpful was once the cause of an absurd happening, the memory of which makes me laugh even now. Our music room was built out into the garden, and its flat roof lay just below my bedroom window. All the neighbouring cats found this roof an excellent *rendez-vous*, and the weird yowls and shrieks by which the cats invited their constantly increasing friends to join them eventually became so deafening that nobody could sleep, especially on fine moonlit nights. My grandmother volunteered the information that cats detested the smell of valerian, and that it would therefore be a good idea to spray the roof with essence of this charming wayside flower. So we did.

Unfortunately, Grossel had got her facts the wrong way about. So far from detesting the scent of valerian, cats have a passion for it, and will come from enormous distances to get even a sniff. As a result of our misguided efforts, where before there had assembled a small string band of cats, there now appeared a full orchestra, an augmented chorus, and about fourteen military bands.

If cats could perform the great Mass by Berlioz—which calls for all these combinations—they could have produced a superb rendering of that colossal work. Never have I heard such a noise. And it was extremely funny, seeing that big roof absolutely solid with cats of every shape and size, their noses ecstatically pointing heavenwards, and their mouths wide open singing hymns of praise to valerian for all they were worth. A startling glimpse of Nature in the raw.

But one could never be the least bit annoyed with "Grossel." That vagueness of hers, causing her to make the most unlikely statements, was always a source of pleasure to us as we listened to Father's gently Macchiavellian methods of getting at the rights of the matter.

"George dear," she said one day, knowing it would interest Father, "George dear, I hear that Brahms is going to Australia."

"Really? To Australia?"

"Yes, dear."

"Well, well!"

Her astonishing news, in view of Brahms' well-known aversion to leaving even Vienna, was received with an air of great interest, behind which it immediately became apparent to the silently convulsed rest of the family, listening and watching intently, that father was busily exploring his own mind as to what the real facts might be.

In a moment or two he said musingly: "Ignaz Brüll is just going to Budapesth. . . ."

Bull's-eye!

That was what the dear thing meant all the time. But the difference, as a Babu clerk of my husband's used to say, is very different.

One smiles at Grosse's simplicity, but it is of the same stuff as this: Someone gave her a "Musicians' Calendar" one Christmas, in my father's early days. It was one of those sheet-a-day things that you pull off, with two or three musicians' birthdays to each sheet. When it came to February 18th, "George Henschel 1850" appeared to her delighted gaze, along with his picture. That sheet was never torn off, and the calendar remained untouched till its proud owner's death at eighty-five, when her son was fifty-one years old. That may be simple, even foolish. But the love that inspired it might well be the envy of the more sophisticated!

CHAPTER 4.

When my father first settled in England—after his three years conductorship of the Boston Symphony Orchestra—he was much struck with the fact that there were no regular orchestral concerts in London proper, during the winter season. The Philharmonic and those “Orchestral Festival Concerts” which had been founded in 1879 by the violinist, Hermann Franke and conducted by Hans Richter—these did not begin their season until after Easter.

From what my father has told me, and indeed from what we can obviously deduce for ourselves in the face of the enormous growth and development of musical activity of every kind in the last decade or two, music in England in those days was more or less caviare to the general. But there appeared to my father to exist a sufficient number of the “particular” to warrant the experiment of establishing a series of winter orchestral concerts in St. James’ Hall. Thus it came about that he founded his own orchestra, the London Symphony Orchestra, which he conducted for nine consecutive years. His actual first appearance as a conductor in London had been in 1879, when he conducted the first performance in England of Brahms’ magnificent *Triumphlied* for double chorus and orchestra.

As had been the case in Boston, he introduced a good many new works against his permanent “background” of Beethoven and Brahms. A year or so before my father’s death a young musician friend of mine overheard one of our contemporary hard-bitten orchestral players say, after a fine Brahms concert in Queen’s Hall, “Yes—jolly good, but you should really only have old Henschel to conduct Brahms!”

One season, my father played the nine Beethoven symphonies in order, one at each concert. Many fine musicians of to-day seem to have learned their classics at his knee, and it is no exaggeration to say that every time I see Dr. Vaughan Williams, he reminds

me that he owes most of his knowledge of the classics to father. "He taught me all my Beethoven . . ." he says.

The greater the man, the more eager is he to acknowledge his indebtedness.

In one of my father's diaries I find all his tempo marks for the Beethoven symphonies (except the Ninth) and I think they will be of interest to conductors. Father took the quick movements on the slow side, and allowed the slow ones to move easily and freely. "Those glorious great *allegros* and *prestos*," he often said to me, "are all the finer for being held firmly in hand, like a thoroughbred horse, so that one is made aware of their rhythm by their very pressure against the curb, so to speak. Whereas slow movements lose balance and sometimes even coherence by being played too slowly."

In a lecture on interpretation in music, my father said—speaking of *tempo* in general: "Good music not only does not lose, but rather gains by the *tempo*, whatever it may be, being taken with deliberation." (He did not feel that this was incompatible with speed or lightness, for one can be *unhurried* even in the midst of great speed.) "There are degrees in any designation of time," he continues, "and one is apt to forget that the Italian words common for that purpose may refer, not only to the metronomic measure, but also to the character, the mood, of a piece. *Allegro* means lively. But there are degrees of liveliness. An elephant may be lively, but I take his liveliness to be of a different character from that, for instance, of the frisky little chap whose antics are so deliciously described in Goethe and Berlioz' *Song of the Flea*. I remember once hearing Schubert's *Erlking* taken at such break-neck speed that I wonder father and child were not killed before the end of the first stanza: Night wild—Father and Child—Ride through the Dark—Erlking out for a Lark—Boy Frightened—Father's Grip tightened—'Father, ride on!'—'Yes, my Son!'—Home in Fear and Dread—Father alive—Child dead."

Here are the Beethoven *tempi*, as written in my father's diary:

I

<i>Adagio molto</i>	$\text{C} \text{ } \text{♪} = 88$
<i>Allegro con brio</i>	$\text{♩} \text{ } \text{♪} = 112$
<i>Andante cantabile con moto</i>	$\frac{3}{8} \text{ } \text{♪} = 120$
<i>Allegro molto e vivace</i>	$\frac{3}{4} \text{ } \text{♪} = 108$
<i>Adagio</i>	$\frac{2}{4} \text{ } \text{♪} = 63$
<i>Allegro molto e vivace</i>	$\frac{2}{4} \text{ } \text{♪} = 88$





II

<i>Adagio molto</i>	$\frac{3}{4} \text{ } \text{♪} = 84$
<i>Allegro con brio</i>	$\text{C} \text{ } \text{♪} = 100$
<i>Larghetto</i>	$\frac{3}{8} \text{ } \text{♪} = 92$
<i>Allegro</i>	$\frac{3}{4} \text{ } \text{♪} = 100$
<i>Allegro molto</i>	$\text{♩} \text{ } \text{♪} = 152$





III

<i>Allegro con brio</i>	$\frac{3}{4} \text{ } \text{♪} = 60$
<i>Adagio assai</i>	$\frac{2}{4} \text{ } \text{♪} = 80$
<i>Allegro vivace</i>	$\frac{3}{4} \text{ } \text{♪} = 116$
<i>Allegro molto</i>	$\frac{2}{4} \text{ } \text{♪} = 76$
<i>Poco andante</i>	$\frac{2}{4} \text{ } \text{♪} = 108$
<i>Presto</i>	$\frac{2}{4} \text{ } \text{♪} = 116$

IV

<i>Adagio</i>	C 	= 66
<i>Allegro vivace</i>	C 	= 80
<i>Adagio</i>	$\frac{3}{4}$ 	= 84
<i>Allegro vivace</i>	$\frac{3}{4}$ 	= 100
<i>Allegro ma non troppo</i>	$\frac{2}{4}$ 	= 80







V

<i>Allegro con brio</i>	$\frac{2}{4}$ 	= 108
<i>Andante con moto</i>	$\frac{3}{8}$ 	= 92
<i>Allegro</i>	$\frac{3}{4}$ 	= 96
<i>Allegro</i>	C 	= 84





VI

<i>Allegro ma non troppo</i>	$\frac{2}{4}$ 	= 66
<i>Andante molto moto</i>	$\frac{12}{8}$ 	= 50
<i>Allegro</i>	$\frac{3}{4}$ 	= 108
<i>Allegro</i>	$\frac{2}{4}$ 	= 132
<i>Allegro</i>	C 	= 80
<i>Allegretto</i>	$\frac{6}{8}$ 	= 60

VII

<i>Poco sostenuto</i>	C  = 69
<i>Vivace</i>	$\frac{6}{8}$  = 104
<i>Allegretto</i>	$\frac{2}{4}$  = 76
<i>Presto</i>	$\frac{3}{4}$  = 132
<i>Assai meno presto</i>	$\frac{3}{4}$  = 84
<i>Allegro con brio</i>	$\frac{2}{4}$  = 72

VIII

<i>Allegro vivace e con brio</i>	$\frac{3}{4}$  = 69
<i>Allegretto scherzando</i>	$\frac{2}{4}$  = 88
<i>Tempo di menuetto</i>	$\frac{3}{4}$  = 126
<i>Allegro vivace</i>	C  = 84

The rhythms of my father's every-day occupations were very largely dominated by the Beethoven symphonies. Many years ago, he and my uncle (a young man and excellent in a boat) were rowing on the Lake of Brienz, my father stroke. Suddenly my overworked uncle, feeling rather exhausted, said :

"Henschel, you are rowing much faster than you began, and I can't keep up."

"Impossible, my dear boy," came the answer. "I can't have changed my tempo, because I'm rowing to the *Eroica*!"

When Toscanini first came to London and conducted the *Eroica*, among other works, I was particularly interested to hear what father had felt about it. I found him excited and full of emotion when I went to see him the morning after the concert.

"Oh, Helen," he said, "I never expected to hear the *Eroica* played like that this side of Heaven!"*

I realise to the full my good fortune in having imbibed the great musical classics when I was so young that I cannot remember my first hearing of them—except the Ninth Symphony. I heard that first when I was fourteen, and shall never forget it. At the opening bars I felt as if I had been lifted up by a giant hand, hurled into space, and become a minute pin-point among wheeling planets, ages before the birth of this or any other world.

But to return to the St. James' Hall. One of my very earliest recollections is of being taken to hear Joachim play there. Those who ever heard music in St. James' Hall will always mourn its loss, though it wasn't very comfortable and certainly not beautiful. I do not suppose that any concert hall has existed with more perfect acoustics, and I wonder if it can be entirely imagination that endows it with a unique atmosphere of intimacy and charm, a warmth of welcome to those who came there to make music and to listen to it?

"Dear old St. James' Hall and those unforgettable Monday and Saturday Pops," wrote my father after its demolition. "The dear old uncomfortable, long, narrow, green-upholstered benches (pale green horse-hair), with the numbers of seats tied over the straight backs with red tape (bright pink tape), like office files.

"In spirit I even now sit down on one of those benches, and all around me stirs into life again. . . . There is the fine old hall, filled to every corner, crowded even on the platform . . . then a momentary hush . . . the stately Joachim emerges from the recess on the left, followed by the modest Ries, the solemn Strauss, the gentle Piatti. They gravely acknowledge the round of applause that greets their appearance, and take their seats before the desks, and the four beautiful stringed instruments in rare perfection pour forth sounds that seem to come straight from Heaven."

The chamber concerts, known as the Saturday and Monday Pops, were an important feature of musical life in London in those

*It was by his taking the—for him—unusual step of writing to Toscanini, that the charming little correspondence between these two "honest musicians" came into being.

days; Saturdays in the afternoon and Mondays in the evening. Their programmes were, of course, almost exclusively classical, and the Joachim Quartet their—if I dare use so modern a term in this connection—star turn. I am glad that I can just remember hearing them play, though the recollection is not over clear. I was about five when at my urgent request I was first taken to a concert.

More distinctly do I remember the quartets led by Madame Norman Neruda, the wife of Sir Charles Hallé. Her name evokes in me a memory of crystal-pure tone, a gracious personality, and a scent of violets.

The big concert hall was upstairs. On the ground floor was a small hall in which the Moore and Burgess Minstrels gave their entertainment on Saturday afternoons. This was a famous black-faced concert party, whose programmes of music and merriment were the joy of children of all ages. Sometimes, if a door had been left open, a sound of banjos, tambourines and “bones” would float up the stairs and mingle impertinently with *pianissimo* passages in classical *adagios*. I remember on one occasion my mother and I set out full of virtue (I was very small and my mother really only a few years older!) to hear the Joachims at a Saturday Pop. Moore and Burgess began half an hour before the Pops did, so that when we arrived I was aware of a series of very inspiring and rhythmic gay sounds, thumping and shimmering away in a most enlivening manner on the ground floor, calling up in my rather solemn childish heart that Girls-and-boys-come-out-to-play atmosphere which, I am thankful to say, I have resisted less and less with the passing of the years.

“Mummy,” I said, “what are Moore and Burgess like?” I spoke in a still, small voice.

“Shall we . . . ?” she whispered, her eyes shining, “*shall* we—just for once—go to hear Moore and Burgess instead of Dr. Joachim?”

That is the sort of person she was. So we did. And I don’t know which of us enjoyed herself the more. Certainly no school child playing truant can have had more fun than my mother had over this fall from classical grace. Joachim himself was delighted

when he was told about it. He was so kind and charming to children. Years after the Moore and Burgess episode I remember looking forward with considerable apprehension to playing the fiddle for him (I was fourteen.)

I told Dr. Joachim how frightened I was.

"Why?" he asked.

"Because you are such a very *very* great violinist."

"But, Helen, that is just why you needn't be nervous. The more one knows about how difficult it is to play well, the kinder one is in listening. So you see, I am a very kind listener."

And he was. I have his photograph, bearing the legend : "Helen Henschel verdient eine besonders gute Violine." (Helen Henschel deserves a particularly good violin.)

About a year later I was brought face to face with another great musical hero. My mother took me with her to Carlsbad, to keep her company while she was doing a cure. I had heard, not long before, Dvorák's Symphony *From the New World* for the first time, and had been completely carried away by the beauty of the slow movement which I knew entirely by heart and was always humming about the place. My excitement may therefore be imagined when one afternoon a note was brought to my mother from Dvorák, asking if he might call upon her. I could hardly wait for the day to come, and I spent most of the intervening time wondering if I could pluck up enough courage to ask him for his autograph.

Came the day, as the silent films were so fond of saying. Dvorák was a little man, with an untidy beard and a pair of piercingly bright eyes. I found him a little alarming. However, just before he left, I summoned up all my strength and said :

"Please, may I have your autograph, and please would you write a bar of your music for me?"

"Certainly," Dvorák replied. "What shall I write?"

"O please, the slow movement of the *New World*!" said I, emboldened by the kind smile behind the piercing eyes.

As he took up his pen to write, he suddenly looked at me and

mused: "Let me see, now, I don't think I remember just how it goes. Could you help me?"

My shyness disappeared in my eagerness. "O yes, Herr Dvorák. It goes like this." And I proceeded to sing the whole of the first part.

"Thank you," he said. "It *begins* to come back to me, and I think I could write it all if you would sing it to me once again."

So I did, and it was years before I realised I had been exploited. Maternal pride—! But I have the autograph and the bars of music, that is the main thing, with a charming dedication in Czech.

I am told that in the Eighties there was a craze for the autograph fan, usually a sandal-wood fan, each rib being intended for the signature of a famous person. My mother possessed one of these, and when in Boston she sent it to Oliver Wendell Holmes. It came back with these lines:

"My dear Mrs. Henschel,

"It delights me if I can in any way please you who have lent so much happiness to the air we breathe. I only fear that you will find it hard to get a cool breath from a fan which holds the names of so many warm friends."

The first performance in England of Wagner's Symphony, conducted by my father in November, 1887,* reminds me of the famous Wagner cat which inhabited St. James' Hall. This animal is said to have walked on to the platform at rehearsals whenever any work by Wagner was being played—and at no other time. I believe it was always shut up during Wagner concerts, but managed to escape once or twice and stalk majestically to the centre of the platform. Whether or not in time to the music, history does not relate.

Tile-walking Wagnerians are not the only nuisances with which a conductor has to grapple. A soloist who was to sing Beethoven's *Buss-lied* (Song of Penitence) at one of my father's concerts found himself, at the very last minute, unable to appear.

*Three months later my father gave the first performance in England of Brahms' Double Concerto, with Joachim and Haussmann.

So my father sang it, evoking from the leader of the second fiddles the apt comment that it seemed quite right for the *Buss*-song to be sung by the conductor.

My father has filled in gaps at concerts in more ways than one. Once, when the Scottish Orchestra were on tour, a clarinet player was taken ill. My father sang the whole of his part, while conducting the symphony, and nobody knew anything about it.

Then there was a concert at which Saint-Saëns' *Danse Macabre* was on the programme, and at the last moment they discovered that the xylophone had been left behind. Imagine the *Danse Macabre* without the xylophone! Impossible to substitute another work, because the librarian had brought only the parts necessary for that particular programme. What to do? "All of a sudden," writes my father, "it came to me. I knew that in the score nearly every note given to the xylophone was duplicated in the oboe. It was therefore not so much the actual musical note of the xylophone which mattered, as the mere sound of wood struck by the hammers. So I called for the gentleman of the percussion, gave him the xylophone part, and instructed him to play the whole of it *on the leg of a chair*. The result was an unqualified success. Nobody saw the chair, everyone heard the sound of the wood, which even we musicians could have sworn came from a xylophone. And why not? The chair was made of wood (*xylon*) and it gave a sound (*phone*). Meeting the composer in Paris the year following, I told him the story, and he was as much amused by it as we had been at the time."

Here is a lovely and touching instance of another orchestral make-shift.

After my mother's death, my father wrote a great Requiem Mass for solo voices, chorus and orchestra. This work was being performed at a series of concerts in Holland, a country where my parents had been particularly loved. The score calls for a bell in F in the opening, and again in the final bars. When the work came to be performed in Utrecht, it was found that there was no bell in F among the resources of the orchestral society there. My father much disliked the idea of a tubular "bell" such as is often used, but

there seemed no alternative. One of the members of the concert committee was struck with an inspiration. There were, at that time, repairs going on in the tower of the great Dom—for the first time since the fifteenth century—and the magnificent old bells were temporarily out of commission in consequence. The Mayor of Utrecht, a devoted musician, was approached and gave permission for the big tenor bell to be used for the Requiem performance. It was brought down from the tower, its two massive supporting stones with it, and hung on the platform between two blocks of wood. Thus it was that one of the famous bells of Utrecht Dom was heard for the first time, and I should think for the last, away from its brothers in the tower, the tower where it had hung for nearly five hundred years, in memory of a young singer who was born three thousand miles away.

CHAPTER 5.

A very exciting moment in my childhood was that in which Paderewski first appeared on our horizon. Here again it was my sense of beauty that was deeply stirred. He had a truly astonishing complexion, a skin of almost transparent whiteness, which heightened the expressiveness of his smouldering and rather melancholy eyes, and a great aureole of bright red-gold hair. Any enthusiastic description of a fairy prince in any worth-while story would describe him perfectly. I looked upon him as something quite outside life and could hardly believe he was a real person. Until one day, when we were all in the garden, he suddenly seized me in his arms, swung me up into the air, sat me down on the top of his head, and snorting like a ferocious horse proceeded to race round the lawn, I fairly yelling with delight. From that time on there was no doubt in my mind as to his reality.

When we had been at Bedford Gardens a few years, my father built a music room on to the house. When it was finished, that is when it had a roof and a floor, my parents entertained the workmen to lunch in it. A large trestle table was brought in, and the men were waited on by my mother and father and several of their friends, including Paderewski in a top-hat. When the men had finished their beef and beer, Paderewski—minus the top-hat—sat down and played to them, surely an unusual experience for the British working man! I see so clearly the great room with its trestle table, and the grand piano, Paderewski's pale face and shining hair lit by the afternoon sun; the men in their working clothes and overalls and my parents and their friends—all under the same spell, the spell which binds together all who have ears to hear. During the seventeen years we lived in that house, hundreds of great artists made music in that room, but this occasion stands out in my mind as perhaps the most memorable.

Paderewski was the glittering centre of musical life in London whenever he was there. Apart from his genius and his physical beauty, he carried with him—even to my childish perception—a compelling atmosphere of inward nobility and dignity which alone would have marked him as a being apart.

But that there were people impervious to these atmospheric emanations is also certain. One famous lawyer created frightful consternation, and sent himself to Coventry for some time, by describing Paderewski as "a cheery little chap." That, of course, is true, too. Paderewski was often very cheery, and he was by no means a tall man. But as a description of the "darling of the gods," the lawyer's summing-up was not a success!

One of our dearest friends was Burne-Jones. My father took me with him on many Sunday mornings to the studio in North End Road, where he would sing and play while Burne-Jones painted. Burne-Jones was then engaged on his "Sleeping Beauty," and my child's imagination endowed it with a kind of supernatural quality. I was convinced that the figures in it really were enchanted princes and princesses, and this sense of enchantment pervaded the whole studio for me.

Burne-Jones himself was the most benevolent of enchanters, an adorable person with children. There was so much of the child in his own personality that he seemed to merge it quite naturally into that of the youngest of his friends. He would converse with great gravity and an almost respectful attention, which was wonderfully comforting to that immense sense of importance which—mingled with a contrasting feeling of littleness—constitutes so great a part of the child make-up. I loved him with passionate devotion. He gave me three little primers, when I was four years old, and out of which I learned to read.* In each one he inscribed his name and mine, and sometimes a drawing as well; a delectable fluffy bird with its beak open was my favourite. In another volume he wrote: "H.H.H. from her friend and champion, E.B.J." (marking some occasion on which he had overborne my parents' strictness and ensured some treat I would otherwise not have been allowed). Another inscription he wrote was: "H.H.H. from her *special* friend, E.B.J."

It was my father who took Paderewski with him on one of his visits, knowing well how ideal a subject for Burne-Jones' delicate pencil Paderewski would be. A lovely drawing emerged. While

*And both my children too.

Burne-Jones drew, my father sang and played the organ, an accompaniment to his work which Burne-Jones described in his diary as "good for the emotions but bad for the drawing."

Another frequent visitor to our house about this time was Tschaikovsky, who had come to England to receive an honorary degree at Cambridge. My father had met him years earlier in Moscow, and described him then (1875) as "a most amiable, kind, gentle, modest man, with just that touch of melancholy in his composition which seems to be a characteristic of the Russian."

The melancholy was naturally enough not evident to me as a small child, but the gentleness and kindness were. Nobody could have been more charming than he was. One of my life's minor tragedies is that he wrote me a long letter when he left London, that the wind blew it off the table into the waste-paper basket, and that the housemaid lit my fire with it. I have always felt a particular sympathy for Carlyle since! But I do possess a personal remembrance of Tschaikovsky—the photograph he gave to my mother, inscribed: "A Madame L. B. Henschel, de la part de son fervent admirateur, P. Tschaikovsky."

And who, with a heart to be warmed, could fail to be her "fervent admirateur?"

One does not usually associate domestic virtues with artists, but my mother could boast of a great many. The household wheels ran with the greatest smoothness. My father was guarded and tended like a hot-house plant, and whenever we went to America she would spend hours arranging for case upon case of American dainties to be sent to swell our London store cupboard. This seems a strange thought now, when even the tiniest village shop is capable of producing several of the fifty-seven varieties.

Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, used often to walk up from Kensington Palace to have a chat with my father. (She had been his first pupil.) On one occasion she presented herself unannounced and asked if Mr. Henschel was at home. The parlourmaid, a new one, answered the Princess' enquiry with the carefully inculcated and inevitable formula: "Have you an appointment, Madam?"

"No, but I think Mr. Henschel would see me."

"I'm sorry, Madam," replied the well-drilled recruit. "Mr. Henschel is unable to see anyone without an appointment. Perhaps you would kindly write?" (Telephones were unusual luxuries in those days, and we did not have one.)

The Princess, now rather interested to see if she could break down this firm obedience to duty, tried again. In vain. The parlour-maid must have been the female counterpart of Mr. Arthur Treacher, that most immovable of film butlers. At last, the Princess played her trump card, saying in her gentle voice: "*I think*, if you tell Mr. Henschel it's the Princess Louise, and that I won't keep him a minute. . . ."

The delightful part of this story is that the Princess personally congratulated the parlour-maid on her devotion to duty, and told my mother it was but another enviable proof of her perfect house-keeping.

House-keeping in those car-less and telephone-less days was not so simple a matter as it is to-day, especially in so busy a house as ours. However, pupils might come and pupils might go, Princesses might batter at the door, string quartets might announce themselves for dinner at twenty minutes' notice—it all revolved with apparently unfailing smoothness around my mother, often at considerable cost of nervous energy to herself. But she enjoyed it all so much! Among her more intimate friends she was full of fun. Once, when an inveterate late comer arrived at a luncheon party about three quarters of an hour behind time, my mother—hearing his voice in the hall—quickly removed his place at the table and received him with the sweetest of smiles as a most welcome but unexpected guest. Needless to say, he was not allowed to remain in this embarrassing position for more than a few seconds.

After these luncheon parties there would often be music, and then the hostess, the ménagère, the writer of business letters, the watcher of the stock market, the careful investor—all would be swallowed up in the sensitive singer and the true artist.

As I approached my 'teens, it was decreed that I must no longer be permitted the luxury of a Nanny. Part of the New England strain again, I suppose, which did not allow of too much

ease and joy in the daily routine of the young. Not that my Nanny allowed me an undue portion of ease. But joy—oh yes! the cup of joy full and running over. To this day I feel sure that my parents cannot have realised the anguish it caused me to part with my Nanny. Of course, she has never really left me; now, as always, she remains a vital part of my life.

Still, I resent the fact that she was not kept on in one of the dozens of other capacities in which she could so perfectly have functioned. My loss was others' gain, so perhaps I ought not to grumble. But I do, all the same, and I think the grumble may please her and any other Nanny who might happen to read these lines.

Nanny was succeeded by a series of peculiar and, to me, more or less awful females, vaguely known as "lady housekeepers." They were, with one exception, decidedly not "ladies," and all the housekeeping was done by my mother as it always had been, and was until her death. So that the term was singularly inappropriate.

The exception was a middle-aged Scotswoman, whom I liked immensely; she was a good sport and we had grand times together. After one or two mysterious bouts of illness eventually discovered to be acute dipsomania, she left hurriedly. But she was a lady all right. She died not long after leaving us, and I mourned her death as I had mourned her departure from our house.

There followed a strange being I remember as "the frightful Frenchwoman." When years later, I introduced myself to *Madame Bovary*, I seemed to be meeting the atmosphere of Mlle. T— in every page of that depressing masterpiece. Mlle. T— had a long thin face, a long white nose, long bony fingers, and wore black clothes which were long and bony, too. And she had a pinkish-auburn toupée like a last year's bird-nest.

What imp of Satan can possibly have usurped my mother's loving mind when she engaged this ghoul to be a companion to me will remain a mystery for ever.

She didn't stay long, though!

It was my parents' invariable habit to say good-night to me when I was in bed. Even on the nights of dinner-parties Nanny would slip in and whisper a word to Mother, who would then excuse herself and run upstairs to give me the good-night kiss

without which I couldn't go to sleep. The other old trouts had bowed to the fact that this ritual must be observed. Not so Mlle. T—. Her sense of the *comme il faut* was outraged by this departure from the conventions, this hopeless departure; and a distressing scene was enacted in my bedroom when she flatly refused—on the night of a dinner party—to let my mother know I was ready to say good-night. She did not deny that Mother had asked her to do so; which made it ten times worse. I wept, I implored, I raged, I became hysterical. Not because I was obsessed by the ritual. I'd have been perfectly willing to forego the evening custom if my mother had asked me. But this monstrous woman seemed to be standing between me and my mother like some horrid phantom in a nightmare. At last, Mother herself—dinner-party or no dinner-party—began to realise that something was wrong, and came up on her own.

That was the end of Mlle. T—. I am sure she must have thought us all *mals-élevés*.

The next figure in this puppet-show was rather a dear, though she drove us nearly crazy by her flawless idiocy.

There exists a photograph of my father taken when he was seven years old; a dear little boy with large dark eyes and a wistful expression. On my mother's copy he had written the sweet posy:

"Why do I look so dreamy, so forlorn?

Because the girl I love is not yet born."

Miss A—, always a mass of sentimentality, gloated gently, but at the same time enquired: "Mr. Henschel didn't write that when he was seven, did he?"

My mother was coming downstairs one day, carrying an armful of bound music books, when the top one slipped and the whole lot bumped and clattered down the stairs, reaching the parquet floor of the hall with a noise like an avalanche. Miss A—, appearing from nowhere, announced blandly: "You've dropped something, Mrs. Henschel."

For years afterwards this became our standard remark upon hearing startling and mighty noises.

When Miss A— left us, I feel it was largely because my mother was not of the temperament to absorb the demonstrative adoration lavished upon her by this likeable but witless soul. "Lady house-keepers" were mercifully dropped after this, and a "maid-house-keeper" installed instead. It was finally realised that at the age of sixteen I had no need of police supervision.

Mrs. Axford then appeared on the scene and was our cook for



George Henschel at the age of 7.

From a Photograph.

many years. A Wiltshire woman, she cooked like an angel. There was something in her downright and reliable make-up which appealed so much to my mother that she took Axford to America, as her personal maid, on the last concert tour but one. (It may be because she presented the greatest possible contrast to Mother's previous maid, a vaporous and temperamental lady who, on receiving a letter from home, rushed weeping into Mother's New York bedroom and screamed, "Bert's dying!"—without having possessed herself of the fact that the word "dying" came as the last word on one page, while on the next page the sentence about her fiancé gratifyingly continued, "to see you again.") Axford was a sensible, motherly sort of woman who liked us all and wanted to see a bit of the world. She came with us to America and the experiment was a crashing success. That particular voyage to New York featured the strangest pair of comedians. To my parents' joy, they discovered that among their fellow-passengers was Ian Malcolm, a young man in whose company one remained permanently stimulated and amused.

Sir Ian Malcolm of Portlalloch has always seemed to me a true darling of the gods. In those days he was exasperatingly beautiful, with his corn-yellow closely curling hair, his fine figure, his great height, and his dazzling smile. He was—and is—no mean musician, a poet, and a brilliant conversationalist. Really too much for one man! And his clothes! My mother used to say he was the only man she ever knew who could wear the most outrageously fashionable clothes without looking absurd.

Among all these attributes I have left out perhaps the most delightful—the ability to turn himself back into a schoolboy at any moment.

On the voyage he took Axford to his heart. What schoolboy doesn't make love to the cook? "Where's old Axminster?" he would yodel, bursting into the drawing-room (drawing-cabin I suppose I should say) and snatching the protesting woman away from her stocking-darning.

"Come and dance, dear old Aunt Axminster. Come and dance!" Seizing my mother's plaid shawl, whirling it round his head and bringing it dexterously about his middle like a kilt, he proceeded to execute a series of highly complicated steps in front of the astonished handmaiden, subsequently grasping her hands and frenziedly pushing her through the mazes of a foursome reel, my mother and I, helpless with laughter, having been hypnotised into joining the (very) giddy dance.

CHAPTER 6.

Campden Hill, when we went to live there, had just come into its own as a pleasant and desirable part of London, though not all the houses were as delightful as ours. Rambling, only one storey high, and surrounded by a big garden, it really was like a house in the country.

Just across the road lived Alfred Parsons, the landscape painter. His house was of much the same type as ours, though the garden wasn't nearly as extensive. A large proportion of my parents' intimate friends were painters and sculptors, but few occupied a more shining place than Parsons, a most lovable human being. Later in life, much taken up with landscape gardening at which he was a real master, he left London and moved to Broadway, in the Cotswolds, where lived the American, Frank Millet, Edwin Abbey (not far away) and other painters, as well as the actress, Mary Anderson and her husband, Antonio de Navarro.

When I was a child, "Uncle Alfred" was a very happy part of my life. I can see him now, a bachelor devoted to young children, short, square, with bright speedwell-blue eyes, a little fair beard, and a sweet smile which revealed one broken front tooth, giving somehow—in spite of the beard—an impression of a small boy in the tooth-losing stage. This was heightened by his inability to pronounce the letter "r". I remember once, when out for a walk with him by the river, asking him what a certain building was. I received the answer: "A bwoowah," and found it difficult to disentangle from this rather fascinating collection of vowel-sounds the word "brewery." He had a little rough-haired terrier who went everywhere with him, and was rather *square* in outline like her master. Uncle Alfred often did his own marketing, and when one morning I came home and said to my mother, "At the fishmonger's in Church Street I met a short little square little man with a short little square little dog," she knew at once whom I meant.

Dear Uncle Alfred. . . . After his death—away from London—there might have been seen dozens of the poorest and shabbiest of men and women—unaware of his death—coming on Saturday morning to his London house, to receive the help he had been giving them for years, unknown to any but themselves.

The great event during the Christmas holidays used to be Uncle Alfred's party. This was no mere entertainment for three or four hours, but a Gargantuan affair beginning with a babies' party at three o'clock and going on till midnight and after. It was a proud day when I found myself promoted from the party for babies, and allowed to stay until eight o'clock when the others were hauled away at six. Year by year the hour grew later and later, until as a full-fledged grown-up of eighteen one stayed to the very end, crawling blissfully to bed at 1 a.m., all the stages behind one—helping with the babies, playing games with the school-children, flirting with the undergraduates, and finally dancing waltzes with Ray Lankester, the vast and genial director of the Natural History Museum, who was a great friend of mine.

Thinking over those parties, I have vivid memories of the Llewellyn Davies family. Sylvia Llewellyn Davies, one of George du Maurier's daughters, was a radiant creature. After her early death, her brother Gerald described her perfectly in a letter to me : "She was so big and gay and feminine and jolly." Deeply happy, she carried her happiness about with her like an aura, and shed it quite unconsciously on everyone. To see her arrive with her handsome husband, followed by an increasing train of beautiful little boys, was something one looked forward to each year. In those days of childrens' hideous clothes, what a pleasure it was to see her lovely little creatures in their minute blue or green linen shorts, white shirts gaily embroidered in cross-stitch, and little scarlet berets. I used to occupy myself a great deal with them, just for the joy of looking at them.

Then there were the Beerbohm Trees, mother and daughter; Viola, as always, like a little page-boy in her short velvet tunic, her mother ethereal in floating draperies and pale flower-like colours. And the Comyns Carrs, with their handsome daughter, Dolly, and

their two sons; Philip, now a distinguished journalist and Arthur, the eminent K.C. Arthur was the most exquisite child imaginable, and at the age of six I was very deeply in love with him. My passion, I am told, was returned, until I eventually shattered the romance by being able to play the piano better than he did.

In Mrs. Comyns Carr's reminiscences she writes: "Helen Henschel was coming to have tea with Arthur, and he said to me in the afternoon, "Of course there'll be no games, for she'll be at the piano again!"

And later: ". . . I'm sure I could have learned a *Volkslied* if I hadn't been neglected in my youth." (He was then aged six.)

"We had a little practice," continues Mrs. Carr, "but he was not very lucky in hitting the notes, and at last exclaimed cheerfully enough: "Well, never mind, I haven't a talent for music, but I have a talent for other things." Adding dourly: "I shan't marry Helen Henschel after all. I shouldn't care to have a wife who was cleverer than I am at anything."

Thus was my first romance shattered. I must have been an odious child, so that was to be expected.

One of Uncle Alfred's closest friends was the painter, Frank Millet, that genial and witty and dearest of characters. Although he made his home in England, after following several professions, including that of war correspondent during the Philippines War, he never lost his peculiarly American and irrepressible humour. I have seldom seen greater kindness in any human countenance, and if anything could mitigate one's grief when Millet went down with the *Titanic*, it would be the certainty that his presence must have softened the terrors of that dreadful death for many of its victims.

"How is Jack?" I asked him once, enquiring after his younger son. "Oh," came the answer, "he's grown so much he has to stand on a chair to comb his hair." It sounded plausible, too. He described my father thus: "Henschel? Oh, he's meat and drink and a summer overcoat!"

All this froth and bubble on the surface was merely the indication of the real goodness, goodness of every sort, below, and it was no wonder that the first "change" we could persuade my father to

make, after my mother's death, was to go and stay with the Millets at Broadway.

Another invariable guest at the Parsons' party was Sargent. He generally came in fairly late, looking rather shy; not timid, but shy in the sense that a horse looks shy when it is wondering whether to bolt or not. There was usually a slightly wild look in Sargent's protruding very blue eyes, though otherwise, with his burly frame and short brown beard, he looked more like a prosperous farmer than an artist. He was devoted to music, and loved to play duets. I often played duets with him myself. The music of Fauré gave him particular joy, and he would bring the new songs by that great composer to show my father, whose singing and playing of them would delight Sargent. Incidentally, it is curious that my father never sang in French in public, save in duets with my mother who numbered many French songs in her repertoire.

One of the finest portraits Sargent ever painted—that is not my own opinion only, but also that of a celebrated living painter—was his portrait of my father. I can just remember it being done, Father taking me to the studio on Sunday mornings just as he had taken me to Burne-Jones' studio. Sargent asked Father to sing while he painted.

"I had only a few sittings," wrote my father. "Standings, I should rather say, for he made me stand on a platform and sing—from *Tristan* by preference—while he was at work. How I used to look forward to those Sunday mornings! For besides his always interesting and instructive conversation—I could, of course, not go on singing all the time—it was a great delight to watch him as he was constantly and intently studying my face, talking and painting at the same time. Now and then he would slowly and deliberately recede about a dozen steps from the easel, look at me steadfastly, stop for a moment, and suddenly—the brush lifted ready for action and without even taking his eyes off me—make a dash for the canvas on which he then recorded his impression, generally accompanying the act by contentedly humming a little tune."

When the portrait was finished, Sargent put the still wet canvas into its frame and he and Father took it with them in a hansom

back to Bedford Gardens, where Sargent gave it into my mother's hand, saying: "I made this for you, Mrs. Henschel." And she said, half-jokingly: "How beautiful! It's George having arrived in Heaven!"

I myself have been painted by the famous German artist, Lenbach. Considering that one of his chief sitters was Bismarck, it seems well-nigh impossible. But I was less than three at the time and Lenbach a very old man. I can clearly remember the studio in Munich, though, and the old painter wearing a black skull-cap. In the studio with him was a younger artist named Passini. I felt rather frightened, perched up on a very high wooden pedestal, father seeming dangerously far away. I would not "pose" or look anything but miserable, until suddenly a blackbird began to sing sweetly in the garden, causing me to turn my head around just as Lenbach wanted it, my mouth a little open, listening intently. I recall the great speed with which the old man then got to work while the going was good, and how—when he had produced one of the loveliest sketches of a child I have ever seen—Passini, dancing about with excitement, kept shouting to my father in his nice Munich dialect: "Nehm'n Sie's ihm weg, er verdirbt's ihna!" ("Take it away from him, he'll spoil it for you!")

How often, indeed, is portrait painting menaced by this danger. When de Laszló painted me, not many years ago, he began the portrait at eleven in the morning and finished it at seven the same day. We were both completely exhausted, but the portrait is more alive than I can describe. Before he began, he had said to me: "I want to make something that will *blow* through the canvas," and that quality is outstanding in this lovely possession of mine. Like Sargent with my father, de Laszló asked me to sing while he painted, and this portrait of me might easily be called *Brahms: Op. 43, No. 1. (Von Ewiger Liebe*, that wonderful song beginning "Dunkel, wie dunkel—.")

But that was in 1922, and I am concerned with the very first years of this century.

Painters. . . . Parties. . . .

And so, inevitably, to Alma Tadema's studio.



Helen Henschel,

Portrait by de Laszlo, 1922.

I can still throw myself back into the atmosphere of Arabian nights splendour and fairy-tale glamour with which my young imagination invested this extraordinary house. It was, quite literally, like nothing on earth, because to enter any of its rooms was apparently to walk into a picture. Lady Tadema's studio, for instance, might have been a perfect Dutch interior by Vermeer or de Hoogh. Tadema's, on the other hand, conjured up visions of all the luxury, the ivory, apes and peacocks of the Roman civilisation with which his art was largely preoccupied.

Looking back upon those, after all, not so desperately distant days, when week after week the studio was crammed with highly intelligent and cultured people from all over the world, acclaiming Tadema as one of the greatest artists of his time, it is strange to realise that most of the present generation have never even heard of him.

I am not in any way qualified to speak of him as an artist, but as a host he was undoubtedly a genius, and the Tadema parties played an important and attractive part in the social life of artistic London for nearly thirty years.

My father made the Tademas' acquaintance two days after his first arrival in London; on February 19th, 1877. "On my first Sunday," he writes, "I had the great pleasure of meeting at a dinner-party in Kensington the famous Alma Tadema, whose *Vintage Festival*, only recently exhibited in Berlin, had created quite a sensation there. Crowds of people could always be seen admiring the picture, and puzzled by the name of 'Alma,' wondering whether the painter was a woman or a man.

Well, here he was, sitting opposite me at the table, a man if ever there was one, powerful in body and mind, spirited, full of vigour, abounding in stories and manifestly happy in the consciousness of ever-growing success and fame; happy, too, in the possession of a young and lovely wife, the rare charm of whose gentle presence enchanted all who came in contact with her. She also was a painter, and of no mean merit. But such was her modesty that when, after her death in 1909, Tadema arranged a loan exhibition of her work, the quantity as well as the high artistic worth of her

paintings, drawings, and studies came as a surprise to her most intimate friends."

Father having introduced you to our hosts, come with me to one of the famous Tuesday evening parties. . . .

The drive, in a four-wheeler, from the house on Campden Hill to Grove End Road, St. John's Wood, takes about half-an-hour—twelve minutes or so in a taxi nowadays—and the four-wheeler is decidedly bumpy and stuffy. (One of my few grouches against Father used to be that he preferred a four-wheeler to the much gayer and smarter hansom, even when there were only two of us. He liked to lean back comfortably and put his feet on the opposite seat; a poor substitute, it seemed to me, for the fresh air and the uninterrupted view from one's perch behind the folding doors of a hansom, not to mention the sound of the bells which were such a charming accompaniment to the stylish trotting of the horse.) However, even the four-wheeler, having amply justified its sobriquet of "growler," eventually arrives, and the outer gate being opened by the porter, we walk up a long flower-banked, tiled pathway, on either side of which we are dimly aware of lawns and trees stretching away into the darkness. We reach the front door, an arresting and unusual front door composed of one huge piece of golden-coloured wood beautifully grained, and this admits us into a square lobby, where we are faced by a straight flight of solid *brass* stairs. When I was small, I of course thought they were gold. It is a big formal party to-night, so we are at once taken up these fantastic stairs into Tadema's great studio, to be received by both host and hostess with that particularly comforting charm which convinces each of us that we are the one person needed to ensure the success of the party. Lady Tadema is wearing a dress of flame-coloured brocade, showing up the high-lights in her lovely red-gold hair, and her gentle happy voice is a fitting descant to Tadema's deep, "So glah . . d!" with which all his guests so soon become familiar.

A vast room is this studio, its domed roof of silver, its walls of sea-green marble. On a shallow platform stands the piano, the case heavily inlaid with various coloured woods and edged all around

with ornaments looking like ivory tear-drops. Inside the lid, little oblongs of ivory are inset, and upon these apotheoses of visiting-cards are inscribed the signatures of the artists who have made music in the studio.

What a galaxy! Right back to Clara Schumann, Mme. Essipoff, Sophie Menter, Joachim, Anton Rubinstein, Saint-Saëns, Tschaikovsky, Sarasate, Boïto, and hundreds of others. I, myself, can *just* remember Sarasate, so let us imagine he is playing to us to-night.

"The matchless Pablo de Sarasate," said my father. "I doubt if in lusciousness of tone, crystalline clearness of execution, refinement and grace, his performance of the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto has ever been surpassed. The way he took that little A natural, the fifth note of the *andante*, without letting the string touch the finger-board—'sur le touche,' I think, is the technical name for it—gave one a thrill of artistic joy never to be forgotten."

Myself, apart from the beauty of his playing—of which, luckily, there exist several records—I shall always be grateful to him for his grand snub to the lady who invited him to dine, "avec votre violon."

"Chère Madame," he replied, "je viendrai avec plaisir, mais mon violon ne dîne pas."

Opposite the platform is a gallery, from which it is great fun to watch the people. This was especially true on those gala evenings so dear to Tadema's heart, when guests were asked to wear fancy dress. My parents often spoke to me about one very successful evening of this kind, when Roman dress was worn. That must have been a wonderful sight, and I was greatly impressed at being told that several of the guests had gilded toe-nails.

One of the stars at these parties was J. Comyns Carr, whose son at the age of six had decided not to make him my father-in-law. A splendid looking man with a Jove-like head, he was probably one of the most brilliant impromptu speakers of his day, with a stimulating quick wit.

At one of Tadema's parties, he was greeted by a lady whose beauty was of character rather than of feature. She obviously

knew him quite well, but he could not for the moment remember her name.

"Who *is* she?" he asked a friend, when the lady was out of carshot.

"Mrs. —," was the answer.

"Of course!" said Carr. "Nothing could be plainer."

And—"What a *slow* train," he observed, or rather purred, to a friend who was wearing a wonderful gown of very heavy cloth-of-gold with an extremely long train.

Tadema had a side to his character which might almost be called hobble-de-hoyish; he rejoiced in toys of every description, and kept a huge collection of them in cupboards in the billiard room. Many a time have I seen him sitting on the floor, surrounded by roaring lions, comic monkeys, all sorts of creatures, zoologically recognisable or otherwise, showing them off to some new friend with great roars of laughter. How he would have adored Donald Duck!

To see him doubled-up and helpless with mirth when father sang that classic lament, *Daddy wouldn't buy me a Bow-wow*, was an unforgettable experience. Having once heard it, Tadema hardly ever let a meeting with Father pass without making him sing it at least once, and Father would laugh almost as much as "Tad" did.

Father always finished the final "bow-wow-wow" with a glorious Moody & Sankey scoop up to the first "wow," and of course with a tinny voice and a strong Cockney accent.

And Tadema would shed tears of joy into his beautiful bandana handkerchief.

It was hard to recognise in this immense child the painter of those pictures in which the detail was so astoundingly clear that every tiny flower on, say, an oleander bush in a Roman garden, could be picked out distinctly under a magnifying glass from its fellow blossoms. Tadema always kept a magnifying glass on the easel when showing his pictures.

Sometimes he used his friends as models. The only time I ever sat to him was when quite a child; I was one of a crowd

looking from a high balcony on to a festival procession passing below. I had to wear a heavy chaplet of daisies, and in this top-heavy condition, on an excessively hot morning, lean from a high step-ladder, looking over its edge. I remember feeling gradually sicker and sicker, but not being allowed to get down until the painting was finished. It's a charming little head, among the hundreds of figures in the picture, but Tadema little knew how narrowly *his* head had escaped disaster! He usually wore a large straw sun-hat while painting; perhaps, in this case, luckily for him. . . .

I was too young to have gone to many of the Tademas' dinner-parties, dinners which preceded the Tuesday evenings, and reserved for closely intimate friends or guests much older and very much more distinguished than I. On the occasions when I *was* present, I found the atmosphere round the table at the end of the evening parties wholly delightful. Both the dining-room itself and the table were long and narrow, making for intimacy and general conversation, as befitted gatherings so often including many brilliant talkers. Though the fact that conversation can flag even in the company of the great, was sadly demonstrated to me once, when I sat next to J. M. Barrie at supper and he retired into himself by folding his arms across his chest and rocking rhythmically up and down in his chair, in complete silence with his eyes closed, during the whole meal. I would not mention this, except that it is probably much more against myself than him. For may it not be said that he took one look and—? On many later occasions Barrie was most kind to me, however.

But that vision of the slight figure, topped by the melancholy face, swinging silently in his chair and looking agonised, will always serve to put me well in my place if I find myself getting at all uppish about my social qualifications!

One of the very last Tadema parties I ever went to—alone this time—has stuck in my mind. A very large lady, who had been singing some of the great dramatic *Lieder* magnificently, elected without any previous announcement to sing a little child's ditty as an encore. It began:

"When I am snugly tucked in bed . . ."

The shock engendered by this sudden effort of the imagination proved too much for a dear old gentleman sitting in front of me. No sooner had the words escaped the singer's lips than he fell off his chair and sat on the floor, where he appeared to be quite content to remain. The song went on to describe—in the first person—the appearance of an angel in the child's room, and the sound of its wings. The climax with the last two lines:

"I know it is its darling wings.

NOT MOTHER FOLDING UP MY THINGS."

The final awful suggestion was delivered in a sudden *fortissimo* snap, like a threat from a very angry school-teacher.

Here the old gentleman's self-control collapsed, for he rose hastily, rushed from the room, and was never seen again.

I think I enjoyed my parties all the more because I seldom went to any, and because I was working hard all day.

Tadema was an inveterate story-teller. I mean a raconteur, not a perverter of the truth. Though it must be confessed that he frequently perverted the story! I have often known my father tell Tadema one of his own latest acquisitions in the anecdotal line, only to have it repeated back to him a few days later as something brand-new. It certainly was new, in a manner of speaking. Tadema overlooked the main point of the story as often as not, or brought it out in the wrong place, expecting one to shriek with laughter. But his Gargantuan enjoyment and explosions of mirth were so infectious, that one couldn't feel irritated for long.

Recently I spent another of those entrancing afternoons with Edith Hipkins. She was in merry mood, and began to "reminisce" about some of my father's pet anecdotes.

"Do you remember," she said, gold spectacles on nose-tip and blue eyes smiling over the rims, "do you remember the story your dear father used to tell about the very pious pastry-cook in an American small town? He invited his Christmas customers to buy his 'Fresh Mince Pies To-day,' but caused his invitation to appear somewhat sinister by hanging the card immediately above a text bearing the injunction: 'Prepare to meet thy God'."

I wish I could reproduce the charming way in which Miss Hipkins speaks; her voice so youthful and pretty, her enunciation so clear and flowing, her laughter so merry. No wonder, I thought, that all her little blue and green and yellow birds began to twitter and sing as an accompaniment to so delightful a sound!

The word "sing" brings to my mind a favourite yarn of my father's; this time a true one.

Joseph Hellmesberger, leader of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra in the days of Brahms, was noted for his love of jokes—practical and otherwise. And for his hatred of pretentiousness and conceit. An unrivalled opportunity to indulge the former while punishing the latter presented itself to Hellmesberger when a certain bass singer, famous as much for his overweening vanity as for his fine voice, gave a Schubert recital in Vienna. The "real musicians" felt it was time to do something to put him in his place.

The following scene was therefore enacted in the Bösendorfer Saal, the very large audience including Hellmesberger, who sat in the front row of the seats on the platform.

Having sung several songs and majestically acknowledged the applause in which Hellmesberger joined with enthusiasm, the singer composed his features into an expression of profound solemnity and awe, preparatory to delivering that superb song, *Der Wanderer*. The accompanist began the prelude, with its slow mysterious triplets. But just as the singer was filling his lungs and opening his mouth to deliver the first phrase

"Ich komme vom Gebirge her"

(I am come from the mountains)

Hellmesberger, from his seat by the piano, whispered in his ear: "Wo kommst Du her?" ("Whence do you come?") The portentous announcement about the mountains thus became the civil answer to a civil question. The song continues:

"Es dampft das Thal,

Es braust das Meer"

(The valley is steaming,

The sea is raging).

"What is the valley doing?" whispered Hellmesberger, immovable and rapt, and only audible to the enraged vocalist, who was obliged by the natural sequence of the song to supply the desired information. But worse was to come. The line referring to the sea is repeated in the song. Hellmesberger, having obtained the answer—in a strangled tremolo—to his enquiry as to what the sea was doing, endangered the life of the now bursting bass by uttering a puzzled long "Wa-a-a-s?" ("Wha-a-a-t?") which, of course, evoked the necessary reiteration from the singer.

Whether this gentleman ever sang in Vienna again, I don't know.

From bassos to bishops is a far cry, but there is a similar put-him-in-his-place element about another story which appealed to my father.

Bishop A. had occasion to visit Bishop B. for a couple of days. Bishop B. was a fanatic teetotaller. Genial Bishop A. was not.

When Bishop A. was about to dress for dinner, Bishop B. took him aside and said: "I'm sorry, my dear friend, but my principles do not permit me to have wine upon my table. However, you will find plenty in your bedroom."

Some months later, the positions were reversed. Bishop B. went to visit Bishop A. "Alas, my dear friend," apologised the latter, "my principles do not permit me to offer my guests water with their dinner. But you will find plenty in your bedroom."

CHAPTER 7.

The happiest year of my musical studies was the one I spent at the Royal College of Music. For some reason I shall never quite understand, my parents seemed to think I should do better work by myself, at home, than with other students. A mistaken idea, indeed. When one is very young, it takes a heaven-born genius like Handel to be happy always working alone.

I had at this time (1900) been studying the violin for about five years. I had never particularly wanted to learn the fiddle, but when I reached the age of fourteen I could quite honestly play the piano as easily as my father, so I suppose he thought that making music with a violinist would be nicer than making it with an extra pianist. I never questioned anything my parents decided for me, but they cannot have found me very enthusiastic in this case. It meant giving less time to my piano, relegating it for the next few years to an *also-ran*. For this crime they were never forgiven by my teacher, Madame Haas. Neither, to speak truly, could I forgive them, though I would not have acknowledged such heresy even to myself. I had wanted to be a pianist, and a pianist only, and I think it was a considerable misfortune for me that my musical talents were great enough to enable me to attain real proficiency in whatever direction it was decreed I should go. At the same time, my parents opposed with all their might the idea of my taking up music professionally. If they felt then that it was a hard life and an up-hill job, what would they have felt now? I wore them down in the end, but one little bit of me will always resent the diffusion of my musical gifts in those important years. On the other hand, it certainly is very pleasant to know as much about violin playing as I had acquired in seven years of hard work, at the end of which I was playing concertos and chamber music—the latter one of the finest of musical enjoyments.

I had been excellently grounded by a kind gentleman named Mr. Kummer. He had beautiful smooth gray hair, a pointed gray beard, gentle brown eyes, and a large garnet ring. . . . From him I was promoted to study with our friend, Enrique Fernandez Arbos, whose death in 1939 must have broken happy links with the past for pretty well every instrumental musician in London, and in countless other places.

Who could forget that handsome melancholy face, pale to transparency, the silky black hair and beard, the superb moustachios ("moustache" is entirely unsuitable), which he was for ever winding round his long, white, nervous fingers? Any story about Spanish grandees in black cloaks and bearing eighty-seven proud surnames must conjure up a picture of Arbos in the mind of anyone who knew him.

As a teacher I found him inspiring. His languid, sometimes even bored, manner concealed strong driving power, and forced one to give of one's very best. I began to work with him before I followed him to College, and in those private lessons to the child of his personal friend he was naturally more *déboutonné* than in his classes. I used to enjoy pulling him out of the abysmal gloom in which I sometimes found him on my arrival at his studio. To the more or less rhetorical question, "Comment ça va?" he would often enough answer in a voice of quite unspeakable despair: "Très mal. Je crois que je vais mourir bientôt." And then a sigh fit to blow one over. But within five minutes I could have him shaking with laughter over some story or other, preferably a slightly naughty one.

At College he could be really alarming, though all his pupils adored him when they got to know him well. Only he didn't suffer fools gladly, indeed he didn't suffer either fools or lazy people at all. The contempt he could pour into the words "Good Gracious" (which he pronounced *Goôgreshuz*, in three equal gloomy syllables) was enough to send anyone flying home to work like a black, that the next lesson might wipe out the humiliating experience.

His *ensemble* classes were a joy, both to play in and listen to. My happiest experience in this direction was playing the second fiddle part in the great piano quintet of Brahms, at a College

concert. Frank Bridge, then in his last year as one of Stanford's most distinguished composition students, played the viola: a fine player, with a mellow lovely tone. The pianist was a very talented but ultra-temperamental boy named Willie Scott, and at the rehearsals the pages were always turned for him by a quiet, dark young man who was studying . . . *accompanying*. His name was Harold Samuel.

Dear Harold—how ill could we spare you! Was there anyone more kind as a fellow-artist, more honourable as a musician?

To return to Arbos. An uproariously funny side balanced his gloom, and his collection of parlour tricks were side-splitting. Then, too, he would make enchanting Spanish "street music" for us, with his cellist friend, Rubio. They played their instruments *pizzicato*, and with their very long little-finger nails produced an exhilarating guitar-like effect. Not only did they play. They sang, too, and judging by their delighted expressions I am sure the songs were beautifully improper.

It was a sad day for all his friends when Arbos went back to Spain to take up the conductorship of the Royal Orchestra in Barcelona. He died, indirectly but none the less surely, as a result of the Spanish War.

Rubio is still here with us, though we no longer hear him play. It would be hard to recognise the dashing companion of the romantic Arbos in the saintly looking patriarch with the long white beard, so often to be met with near the Church of the Servite Fathers in the Fulham Road.*

"Those were the days!" has, I suppose, been said by every student about his particular period at his particular Alma Mater. But it would really be hard to think of a more scintillating display of talent than I was privileged to see among my fellow students during my hatefully short year at the Royal College of Music. Besides Bridge and Harold Samuel, Vaughan Williams could still be seen wandering in and out, John Ireland was in the midst of his

*April, 1940: Rubio has just died. In his old age he became the "despair" of his friends. When he could be persuaded to accept a little help, he immediately gave the gift to one poorer than himself.

studies with Stanford, and—after my day but belonging to the same vintage—there was that sensitive and original musician, Herbert Howells. And a great many others.

The Director!

A more ideal Director than Sir Hubert Parry could hardly be imagined. In her fascinating book, *Without Knowing Mr. Walkley*, Miss Edith Olivier describes Parry as a "whirlwind of genius." It was the whirlwind side of him that would blow him suddenly round the corner from his office at College, to catch you by the ankle as you were running upstairs, while he asked you with mock ferocity where you were going and how dare you, anyway? And the genius, apart from its musical manifestations, lay in the balance he kept between boyish friendliness and the dignity essential to his position as Director. Parry was a big man in every sense of the word; a big man and a great gentleman.

Dr. Villiers Stanford, professor of composition at the College can rightly be called the spiritual father of practically all our best contemporary English composers. In considering the brilliance of his pupils, one is apt to forget what lovely music he wrote himself. Not only the songs, so inextricably associated with their ideal exponent, Harry Plunket Greene, but no less than six symphonies, of which the *Irish* is the most widely known, some delightful operas, and an oratorio, *Eden*. My father sang the part of Satan when this oratorio was produced in Birmingham in 1921.

To musicians, the names of Parry and Stanford are usually coupled together in the mind, probably because they appeared side by side in a musical firmament which for many years had been devoid of bright stars. This is largely true, also, of their bodily appearance at College. In a topical revue of the time, they might easily have been depicted as "Parrystanford"—a sort of Siamese twin, like "Williamamary" in the revue 1066 *And All That*. Though it would have been difficult for these two to have kept their equilibrium in the part; because, as against Parry's speed and rush, Stanford moved very slowly with an odd and most characteristic walk of short, shuffling steps, the feet turned out almost at right angles. I never saw him hurry.

The Lordly Ones at College were, however, not a pair but a trinity. In his own way, Sir Walter Parratt—the Organ Professor—was perhaps the most striking of the three. I feel sure his students would think so, as well as many others who, like myself, attended the gatherings vaguely termed “Music Classes” over which he presided. His suave and caressing voice could—and did—reduce to pulp the hapless student guilty of careless answer to some suddenly delivered question. Few people could be more devastatingly sarcastic than Sir Walter, though I never heard him direct this weapon against any but those who deserved reproach. The only time I saw him at all disconcerted was at one of the “Music Classes.” He played a major chord on the piano and asked a youth at the back of the room if it was major or minor. The youth correctly replied, “Major.” But speaking softly and with a Cockney accent, the answer came out: “Mijor.”

“Ah,” said Sir Walter in a velvety voice, “this gentleman says, “Minor.” But “Major,” I *think?*”

“That’s what I said, Sir Walter,” put in the wretched boy. “Mijor.”

Sir Walter was just beginning to get annoyed at this apparent mockery, when the truth dawned upon him, and it became obvious that he was quite upset at having unwittingly hurt the boy’s feelings.

There was, however, one glorious occasion on which the members of the orchestra were allowed to share with Sir Walter the satisfaction he derived from his delicate sarcasms.

There was to be a big charity concert in Queen’s Hall. One of the items planned consisted of two movements of a Bach concerto for two pianos and orchestra, the College supplying the orchestra. The solo parts were to be taken by two ladies, each famous in her own way, one being a rather eccentric but professional pianist, the other a beautiful Society leader but an enthusiastic amateur. The Society leader, like so many such, did not consider it necessary to remove her many rings and bracelets before starting to play at the rehearsal. The result, of course, was the addition of a kind of celestial percussion to Bach’s lovely *adagio*; in the final *allegro* movement, the actual notes were almost

drowned. Perhaps this was just as well, because it must frankly be said that most of them were wrong ones.

Sir Walter, having conducted this jingling scramble with an expression of respectful rapture, asked Lady — if “everything was to her satisfaction.” “A little too fast, I thought,” she replied a shade reproachfully.

“Ah, yes,” said Sir Walter, rather in the manner of a very polite shop-walker directing a customer to some department from which she could obtain more satisfactory service than the one she was in. “Ah, *yes . . .*” And to the delight of the orchestra, bored stiff as we were with all this waste of our time, he directed us thus : “Once more, the last movement please, and”—blandly—“*a little slower for the ladies?*”

Any organ student suffering from over-confidence, and entering upon a course of instruction from Sir Walter, would be likely to suffer an extremely—I was going to say rude—awakening, but so direct an adjective cannot cover Sir Walter’s annihilating suavity.

He was a great chess player, and if he felt like it would not hesitate to indulge in a game during one of his organ classes. This was where the self-assured newcomer would enter upon the first phase of his Great Illusion. Surely this tall, thin man with the little pointed beard, the untidy hair, spectacles on nose-tip, engrossed in his game of chess, surely he could not be paying much attention to the music that was being played?

But let even one wrong note be wafted on the air, one rhythmic inaccuracy be apparent, and a voice like a very sharp knife coated with honey would instantly come from the chess-board :

“B flat, Mr. Jones !” Or : “That’s a crotchet and a quaver rest, *not* a dotted crotchet, Mr. Smith. . . .”

Apart from giving his full attention to more than one thing at the same time, Sir Walter also possessed a phenomenal musical memory. At St. George’s Chapel, to which he had been appointed organist in 1882, he once accompanied Wesley’s big anthem, *The Wilderness*, a tone down, for the sake of a fine solo boy who on that day was suffering from a cold. It has a pretty elaborate organ part, and after the service a friend complimented Sir Walter on his skill

in transposing it so successfully. "Well, it was altogether rather an awkward occasion," came the cool reply. "There happened to be no copy of the anthem in the organ-loft."

To me, this sort of thing is even more remarkable than being able to play, for example, all the forty-eight Bach preludes and fugues from memory, or to have—like my father—about a hundred songs and duets in your head, words and accompaniment. I maintain that if you devote to any piece of music enough hard work to make yourself completely master of it, you must eventually have it by heart automatically; you can't help yourself. The real perfecting of an artist's performance can begin *only* after he has the work by heart. How, for instance, can a singer listen to himself, carefully trying out different tone-colours, phrasing, *nuance*, and so on—if he has to keep poking his nose into the copy all the time? No. The song, or the instrumental piece, must be lodged firmly in his voice and mind, or under his fingers, before he can begin to work at it; at least, as I understand work. In my own teaching experience, I have come across a lamentable tendency in students to imagine that as soon as they know a piece by heart, they have finished with it. Myself, in the case of (say) Richard Strauss' *Serenade* and of Herbert Howells' *Old Skinflint*—the two most difficult songs I ever attempted in my capacity as my own accompanist—I worked at each of these every day for a year, before I sang them in public; although, of course, I had them by heart after a week.

Not very long ago, a charming girl who had had a few piano lessons with me exclaimed joyfully, when we met at a party a few months later: "Oh, Miss Henschel, I've finished the piano and now I'm learning the violin!" It seemed cruel to crush such naïve triumph by the observation that Messrs. Paderewski, Rachmaninoff, Horowitz and Company must envy her.

Regarding Sir Walter Parratt and his Wesley transposition: It is not in the least necessary for an organist and choirmaster to memorise all the works he has to accompany. Therefore, it seems to me, Sir Walter performed a remarkable feat when he not only played a difficult work from memory, but transposed it at the same time

I cannot leave Sir Walter—nor end this chapter—without recounting a story which I only wish I could have told to him. He would have enjoyed it so much.

My husband's uncle, the Rev. Piers Claughton, was rector of Hutton, in Essex, from 1881 to 1939. When his sister, the Hon. Mrs. Campbell, died some years ago, he arranged a memorial service for her in his church. It was to be as beautiful and as elaborate as he could devise. Following the usual custom, the congregation was supplied with leaflets indicating the order of Service. But alas! for the proof-reading, or for local printers who had been either dilatory or arrogant emendators. Whatever the cause, earnest worshippers, glancing respectfully down the page before the Service began, must have found this variation on the usual formalities a little startling:—

Anthem: "Life and Death."

Words by Dean Stanley. Tune by Parrot.

Parratt—Stanford—Parry . . . I greet them across the years, as in my mind's eye they stand beside the closing door of my unclouded youth. . . .

There is a charming story told of Dumas père at the première of his son's play, *La Dame aux Camélias*.

Congratulating him on his offspring's triumph, an acquaintance added, "But tell me frankly, Maître, surely *you* had a little hand in this work?"

"Mais certainement," was the reply. "L'auteur est par moi!"

It is in the same way that my father has so often spoken in the pages of this book. But at this point he is to speak to you himself, for a while. First, in a delicious piece of doggerel autobiography he wrote for the *London Mercury* when he was eighty-one years old. Then through an article on Interpretation which also appeared in the *London Mercury*.

And finally, through his Personal Recollections of Brahms; in which the reader will make the acquaintance, *en petit comité* so to say, of that master, but in which my father also unconsciously reveals almost as much of his own personality as of Brahms.

PART III.
TO SPEAK PLAIN.

PART III.—TO SPEAK PLAIN.

CHAPTER 1.

He was wont to speak plain and to the
purpose, like an honest man.

"Much Ado About Nothing."

"YOUNG BLOOD."

HAVING been asked by various friends to write
Some things about my early youth which might
Amuse as well as be of interest,
I cheerfully accede to that request,
Adding some salt to what I have to tell
By telling it in downright doggerel.

I

Well—I was born in eighteen hundred fifty.
My parents, not well off, but strong and thrifty,
Hailed the arrival of the child with joy,
Particularly as I was a boy.
Of my first years—but stop, I think I should
(It's always done) say where "my cradle stood."
Mine, then, it stood in Breslau, far away,
An ancient town, once under Poland's sway.
My father—let me briefly mention it—
Was born a Pole, with Polish grace and wit;
My mother, kind, religious, full of life,
Made him a truly exemplary wife.
They both loved music, knowing what it meant,
Though neither of them played an instrument.
And voices, too, they had, charming to hear,
But what they sang, they only sang by ear.
Of my first years there's nothing much to say,
Except, of course, I grew from day to day

Until 'twas time to send me to a school,
Where I remember sitting on a stool
Trying to listen, open-mouthed, perplexed,
And wond'ring what the teacher would do next
And why, in "Kindergartens" there should be
No flowers of any kind that I could see.
At home my mother tried to teach me, too,
To read, to write, what *not* and *what* to do;
From picture-blocks that had been giv'n to me
I was supposed to learn the ABC.
Now you may think 'twould have amused me? Ah, no!
What *did* attract me was the old piano
Which stood in "the good chamber" of our flat;
When'er I could escape, I'd run to that;
On tiptoe raised to reach the keys I stood,
Hitting them hard, until one day I could
Distinguish them by sound and shouted "Mother!
I can make tunes—look here—I've made another!"
And, after that, each week a man did call
To teach me notes and clefs and rests and all.
Soon I could tell a crotchet from a minim.
And then they said, "The boy has got it in him!"
So to a music-school I was despatched
To which I soon grew very much attached;
I sang and played and tried to do my best,
(Perhaps a little talent did the rest)
With the result that in the course of things
I sang the solo in, "O for the Wings,"
When I was nine. And then, without much labour,
When twelve I played the "Concertstück," by Weber.
About that time I madly fell in love
With my fair mistress of the school above.
Her lovely face, her golden curly hair,
Her gentle voice—'twas more than I could bear.
I truly loved her, wished she were my wife,
I was eleven, she was thirty-five.

For her it was that I composed ere long
My first, most passionate, most tender song.
Well, things went on and soon the time drew near
When I'd be asked to think of a career.
That my good people hoped I would become
A business man and meekly stay at home
I long had known, so was not unprepared
For a fierce fight, though not the least bit scared.
My case was clear, I had but one ambition :
I would, I must, I *shall* be a musician.
The fight did come—well I recall the day—
And at the end, of course, I had my way.
I left the school, took leave of friend and foe,
And now the question, "Whither should I go?"
Of famous music-schools the best by far
Was then the Leipzig Conservatoire.
Enquiries there were met with prompt response,
So 'twas to Leipzig I should go at once.
Only a fortnight more and off I'd be . . . !
That fortnight seemed a century to me.
With loving care and many a silent tear,
As if that wooden box had been my bier,
My mother packed it full with boots and shoes
And clothes and all the things I'd have to use ;
In fact made most elaborate preparation
For my sojourn among a foreign nation.
Yes, "foreign," for in Leipzig everything
Was foreign : money, postage stamps, e'en King.
How wonderful I thought 'twould seem, to be
All of a sudden independent, free
To do whate'er I would, and in a town
As yet unknown, but of as great renown
As Leipzig, where the spirits of great men
Still hovered in the air; where now and then
You'd find yourself close to a place of fame :
"Here Goethe stayed when he from Frankfurt came,

And here in 'Auerbach's Keller' he caroused
 With fellow-students, dreaming of his Faust."
 Or. "In this house Bach trained his Choir boys;
 This is the Church in which the glorious noise
 Of organ, chorus, orchestra resounded
 On Sunday mornings to the joy unbounded
 Of those who flocked to hear and see the man,
 Their famous cantor, great Sebastian!"
 Can you imagine what this all did mean
 To me, a boy of barely seventeen?
 At last the day arrived. Mid hopes and fears,
 Embraces, kisses, wishes, smiles and tears
 I left my childhood's home, with but one aim :
 To study hard—to make myself a name.

II

The train was full, but very far from fast;
 It seemed an age before we heard at last
 The guard call out : "LEIPZIG. ALL CHANGE !" "Excited"
 Hardly describes my state as we alighted.
 Father and I, and walked without delay
 To a small hostelry across the way;
 We both were ready for a little bite
 And, after that, retired for the night.
 'Twas all so new, so different, so strange—
 The guard was right when he had called, "All change."
 A modest lodging soon was found for me
 And there was no more reason we could see
 Why Father any longer should remain.
 So the next morning by an early train
 He left. I still can see the anxious look
 In his dear face as final leave we took.
 No wonder : here was I, left among strangers,
 Alone, exposed to Heaven knows what dangers.
 The last few minutes that remained were spent
 Almost in silence, doubly eloquent.

One more embrace, one more kind exhortation,
And slow the train now steams out of the station.
A deep, long whistle, sounding like a moan.
The train is out of sight—I am alone.
Work now commenced in deadeat earnestness.
For Piano I was sent to Moscheles,
One of the famous pianists of the time,
Though then, as such, no longer in his prime.
But what a thrill it was that Fate had woven
For me : taught by a man who knew Beethoven !
Professor Moscheles kept open house,
Presided over by his charming spouse,
A lady, highly cultured and refined,
In whom all female virtues seemed combined.
Soon at their house I was a weekly guest,
Finding amusement there as well as rest.
Frau Moscheles remained my warmest friend
Through many years to come, until her end.
I little thought that she—wasn't it odd?—would
Together with her old friend Walter Broadwood
Be instrumental, barely ten years thence,
In bringing me to England, to commence
The new and richer life that was awaiting
Me over there—but I'm anticipating.
Back then to Leipzig on the wings of thought,
Where in the various subjects I was taught
I made good progress. With my singing-master,
Professor Goetze,* I got on much faster
Than he had dared to hope; and so it came
That soon I was allowed to see my name
In print, on programmes. (In a modest way.
But then, it was yet early in the day.)
About this time there flourished in the town
A Choral Union of just renown,

*Once quite a famous tenor, who had been
The first to sing the part of Lohengrin.

Conducted by a rabid Wagnerite.
Well, this good man, Carl Riedel, came in spite
Of much adverse criticism and derision
To the at last unshakeable decision
To teach the town that Wagner was sublime,
By far the greatest genius of the time—
A thing by no means easy then to do,
When still to thousands Wagner was taboo.
Just then the Mastersingers had been done
In Dresden for the first time; I had gone
To hear the work which I thought full of beauty,
Whilst anti-Wagnerites deemed it their duty
To show ill-feeling and but very little tact
By loudly hissing after ever act.
The Leipzig people were not very keen,
Since Dresden hardly a success had been,
To stage th' expensive work at once, so they
Deferred production to a later day,
Which made old Riedel fly into a rage.
"Begad, I'll do it on the concert-stage,"
He swore. "No settings, costumes, just as though
It were a modern oratorio!"
He did it—sorry, can't recall the date,
But it was still in eighteen sixty-eight.
He first of all secured his soloists,
Consulting the Conservatory's lists,
And thus it was I got my first good start,
For I was cast to sing Hans Sachs' part.
How thrilled the five of us were, as we met
To read for the first time—can I forget?—
That wonderful, that glorious quintet!
Rehearsals now were soon in fullest swing
And nearly ev'ryone knew everything
Almost by heart. Th' excitement was intense.
Then came the concert. . . . *What* an audience!
No seat unoccupied. Some people stand.

Riedel appears, surveying choir and band—
Now silence, then a gentle tap—at last
The concert has begun—The die is cast.
At first the people didn't seem to know
Whether to like that sort of thing or no;
Then by degrees the humour and the charm
Took hold of them and they began to warm.
Some even dared to show their approbation
By now and then a timid exclamation.
The quintet left them more and more enraptured,
Till at the end they were completely captured;
They clapped and clapped and shouted with delight—
It was a truly memorable night.
And Riedel? Well, he too was quite delighted,
Of course, in England he would have been knighted.
Dear, honourable shade, to thee I send this greeting,
And here is to our next and happy meeting!
From what I had achieved so far, one might
Presume that I had worked from morn till night.
Dear Reader, do not for a moment think
That I was ever even *near* the brink
Of nervous breakdown, caused by too much study.
Far, far from it. My cheeks kept round and ruddy,
Nor did I, like the Asra in the song,
Grow pale and paler as I went along.
Alas, I fear I took good care that play
Should alternate with work 'most every day.
Old Leipzig was so terribly attractive,
It kept one ever occupied and active.
"A little Paris," Goethe called it once.
"A town which forms and educates her sons."
Moreover, youth unbound is apt to waste
Much precious time when it has had a taste
Of pleasant things, far nicer than to stay
At home at night and work throughout the day!
To-night it's Bülow, playing the piano,

On Sunday, Freischütz with a new soprano,
On Monday—hardly time to take a breath—
Franz Liszt conducts his Saint Elizabeth,
A friend drops in to take you for a walk
Or for a ride on horseback, or to talk
About the circus or some other show,
Most likely ending with a, "Come, let's go!"
Work is put off with "can't's" and "would's" and "may be's"—
You know the song from Kingsley's Waterbabies :
"Young blood must have its course, lad." Charming line !
"And every dog his day."
Well—I had mine.

CHAPTER 2.

ON INTERPRETATION IN MUSIC.

The question of interpretation in the field of music, and more particularly as regards song, has been prominent of late. Lectures on interpretation and books on the subject have been announced in the papers under attractive titles; but I fear I have never read the latter nor gone to any of the former. Indeed, I confess that throughout my life I have given little thought to interpretation: a fact not easily accounted for, unless it be that when I was young, people must have been more unsophisticated than they are now. Interpretation in music was a thing rarely spoken of. If there was a Beethoven symphony on the programme of a concert, people went because they wanted to hear the symphony, not how a conductor interpreted it. It evidently sufficed these good people to have confidence in the musicianship and skill of the members of an orchestra, and in the loyalty of their conductor as regards carrying out the composer's wishes as to *tempo* and expression; confidence altogether in the efficiency of any artist ready to brave the test of publicity. Besides, conductors were then stationary. The fashion of "prima-donna" conductors travelling from one place to another, each trying to out-do his rival in so-called originality, had not come into being, and there was little opportunity for comparison.

I had read or heard of points in Law being capable of different interpretation by different lawyers. I was aware, also, of the fact that interpreters are persons who have mastered several languages, who act between two people ignorant of each other's tongue, whose office it is to translate orally in their presence the words of parties speaking different languages.

But I never connected the term with music, which (I thought) being a language spoken and understood all the world over, did not require the services of an interpreter. This, of course, was a very youthful notion.

Even in later years the question did not interest me very much, and it was not until three or four years ago that the matter attracted my serious attention. The editor of an American musical magazine asked me to write an article for his paper, an article he wished to be entitled, *Some Elementary Truths on Song Interpretation*. I remember answering the gentleman: "My dear sir, since we are still waiting for a satisfactory answer to the ancient question, 'What is truth?' I must confess myself utterly incompetent to gratify your flattering desire. Indeed, I should be reluctant to accept any mortal's opinion regarding a question of art as truth."

Somehow or other, however, the thing got hold of me and I began to be curious to see what could be said, or at any rate what I might be able to say, on the subject. First of all, I consulted the Oxford Dictionary to see whether among the various definitions of the word "Interpretation" which that wonderfully complete book was sure to offer, there might not be one applicable to music, or to art in general. And there I found that "to interpret" may mean:

Expound the meaning of, bring out, make out the meaning of, explain, understand, render by artistic representation or performance.

Well, this was something to start from, anyhow. Let us see: "Expound the meaning of."

From the oracles of old down to a speech from the front benches, utterances in *words* may, and indeed often do, need "expounding the meaning of." But it seems to me that in music, and perhaps in art altogether, the necessity for explanation nearly always indicates a certain degree of inferiority. I cannot imagine anyone looking at a Velasquez, a Titian, a Rembrandt or a Michelangelo, and asking: "What *does* it mean?" But I am sure we have all heard that question—very likely emphasised by the addition of two little words, "on earth" or something stronger—at exhibitions of Futurist art.

So in a piece of absolute music, i.e. music without words or descriptive title, any attempt at "expounding the meaning of" must, in my opinion, always be more or less a failure. There can be no

need of such an attempt at all if the music be programme music, or if the composer has clearly indicated his intention by the title—Elegy, Reverie, Humoresque, Nocturne, or the like.

And there is no need to ask what Bach, Beethoven and Brahms meant by their symphonies and fugues. You might as well ask the meaning of a cathedral. These things are there to reveal to us the greatness and power of the human mind. On the other hand, in music with words, the poems chosen by the composer are rarely sufficiently obscure or eccentric to require "expounding the meaning of."

Therefore, the only definition of the word "interpretation" with which we need concern ourselves is: "render by artistic representation or performance." And that would seem simple enough, were it not that when it comes to a song, we have to deal with a compound of poetry and music.

That the music of a song, as such, may be beautifully rendered by an instrument other than the voice, we all know. Who—to quote one example—has not heard Schubert's *Ave Maria* played on a 'cello? And the words of a song detached from the music may find an ideal interpreter in the person of a talented reciter, who, as far as music goes, may not know one note from another. The perfect interpreter of a song would have to combine in himself or herself the talents and qualities of both a reciter and a singer.

In a song, the music is first in importance. Should a composer have failed, as some of the best have failed now and then, to make the music fit the words completely, it would be the duty of the singer to consider the *musical* phrase in the first instance, and to fit in the words as well as possible, under the circumstances, even at the risk of breaking between two words which otherwise it would be better not to separate.

The question of breathing is one which puzzles a great many singers. Take, for instance, a Bach or a Handel aria with semi-quaver runs often extending over half-a-dozen bars or more. There are singers who deem it beneath their dignity to breathe during such a run, and they go on until they are red in the face; or else, if they see they must breathe after all, they put in additional words.

This is quite unnecessary. Passages like these should be treated instrumentally. Give a run of this kind to an oboe player, and you find that he will occasionally take an instantaneous little breath, which enables him to do justice to every note and carry the thing through successfully and without exhaustion.

It is generally the childish fear of being thought lacking in physical strength which induces some singers to delay breathing, until the thought of their bursting a blood vessel becomes the only thought left to the poor listener. Interpretation and artistic enjoyment of such a performance are consequently impossible. If you know *how* to breathe, i.e., how to replenish your lungs in the twinkling of an eye and imperceptibly, you cannot really breathe too often, for by such judicious breathing you are far better able to accomplish the task before you.

Years ago I remember being asked to hear, with a view to giving my opinion on her talent and voice, a young singer—now quite famous—and being horrified at her utterly mistaken idea as to breathing. Disregarding all thought of intelligent phrasing, she actually never breathed until positively obliged to do so. I stood it as long as I could, and then got really angry. I stopped her short, and said: "My dear young lady, do you wish to show the people what wonderful lungs you have, or what a beautiful song it is you are singing? You can do only one of the two things at a time. Even supposing your breathing were good—which, being neither inaudible nor invisible, I am sorry to say it is not—you will have to learn that accomplishment, be it ever so great, in anything pertaining to a detail in the mere technique of an art, *becomes a fault the moment attention is drawn to it.*" A singer who, after the singing of a beautiful song, is complimented on the excellent management of his breath or on the wonderful articulation of his words—that singer should go home and resolve to do better next time, and not rest satisfied until he feels that the singer's highest aim should be the full appreciation and enjoyment on the part of the listener of the work interpreted. That aim being achieved, he need wish for no greater satisfaction.

*The italics are mine H H

It is absolutely imperative, for the intelligent rendering of a song, that the vocal technique of the singer—and the breathing is as important a part of it as the actual singing—be developed to a state of efficiency such as to need no more thought than, for example, a pianist should have to give to the fingering when interpreting a Beethoven sonata. *All technical difficulties should have been overcome once and for all, and technique itself become a matter of course, before an attempt at interpretation is made.*

The two principal factors in the technique of singing are vocalisation and articulation, the one referring to music, the other to speech, and each complementing the other. Though I hold that articulation is the more important, since it is not the vowels but the consonants which enable a singer to "bring out the meaning of" a word. You may sing the vowel of the word "soul" ever so beautifully; it is not until you add the "l" with the same intensity of purpose that the word puts on flesh and blood, as it were, and becomes a living thing.

Or take the word "remember." No actor, impersonating the ghost of Hamlet's father, could make an impression with the word by dwelling on the vowel, "Rem-e-e—." But leaving the vowel quickly, and continuing to sound the "m," a good actor could walk across almost the whole stage holding on to that consonant without exaggeration: "Remem-m-ber." It is the consonants, as I said before, which convey the meaning of a word, and they should be made the subject of special study.

If you wish to interpret, you should in the first place strive to make yourself understood, and that—with the best vocalisation in the world—you can do only by a mastery of the consonants; that is, by perfect articulation. You all know that delicious story of the dear old lady coming home from a village concert, where the hit of the evening had been made by a girl singing, "*Wae's me for Prince Charlie*." Being asked if she had enjoyed the concert, the old lady said:

"Not very much; I couldn't understand half the people who sang, except one girl who sang a nice funny song."

"Do you remember the title?"

"No, but she kept on asking. 'Where's me fourpence, Charlie?'"

This singer had evidently *not* made a special study of consonants.

In vocalisation there are certain details which often fail to receive the attention which should be paid to them. One of them, exceedingly important because of its great help towards interpretation, is the *colouring* of the tone. I have heard many an otherwise good artist whose singing became monotonous after a while, by reason of a lack of variety in tone-colour. I remember one lady in particular, the possessor of a rich and beautiful contralto voice, from whose singing—had it not been for the words—you could not possibly have told whether what she sang was sad or cheerful. Yet the five vowels, A, E, I, O, U are what we may call the primary colours of the voice. By skilful and judicious mixing of these colours, a singer should be able to produce as many shades of (let us say) the vowel A as a painter can produce of (let us say) the colour red. In my long experience as a teacher, I have found it of the utmost value to make a pupil sing a whole song on nothing but vowels, with the object of expressing the character of the music by mere vocalisation. We all love that glorious aria in the *Messiah*, "He was despised." Let a student try to convey by the instrument of the voice alone—without words—its sadness and its deeply religious feeling. If she succeeds, she will have taken a very big step towards realising, *i.e.*, towards interpreting, the full beauty of that exquisite blending of words and music.

For a thoroughly artistic rendering of emotional songs of that kind, or of songs of dramatic character, it is of the greatest importance that the singer should have under perfect control not only his technique, but also his feelings. If your feelings get the better of you before the public, you are apt, temporarily and for physical reasons, to lose the mastery of your technique.

There is a story told of the famous American actor, Edwin Booth. His severest critic was his daughter, and he always liked her to watch his performance from the stage box. On one occasion, the play was Victor Hugo's *The King's Jester*, better known to us all as Verdi's *Rigoletto*. The part of the Jester was considered one

of the best of Booth's many fine impersonations. There is a harrowing scene where the poor man finds the body of his murdered daughter in a sack. Booth, on this night, was so overcome by the situation that actual tears ran down his cheeks, and he thought that he had never acted the scene better, or with greater feeling.

But the first thing his daughter said to him as they met in his dressing-room after the play was :

"Were you quite well, Father?"

"Quite. Why?"

"Because that scene with Gilda's body never made so little impression on me; and on the people, as far as I could see."

Naturally. When you lose control of yourself you must not expect to be able to control your audience.

Wilhelmina Schroeder-Devrient was probably the greatest exponent of the part of Leonora in Beethoven's *Fidelio*. She has a wonderful scene in the underground prison. Disguised as the jailor's boy, and unrecognised by her unfortunate husband, the chained prisoner Florestan, she hands the starving man a crust of bread, and sings Beethoven's touchingly appealing notes, "Take this bread, thou poor, poor man." In that scene she was often known to crack a little private joke with Rocco the jailor, while the front of the house was in tears. That is what I call art. Very likely she herself had cried many a time over that same scene, *when studying it*.

The actor—and by that I mean the opera singer as well—has a not inconsiderable advantage over the concert singer, in that he possesses in facial expression and gesture two additional aids to interpretation, both of them important and powerful. Of course, facial expression is available to the concert singer also. But while that and gesture form an essential part in the training of an actor, facial expression is hardly ever systematically studied by the singer of songs, who in this respect is left to his own resources, with often rather curious results. I have listened to many a singer, who from fear of making grimaces has maintained throughout a whole song a sickly, inane, apologetic sort of smile, heedless of the varying moods and sentiments expressed in the song.

On the other hand, I remember hearing a famous singer who, in Schubert's great song, *Der Doppelgänger*, allowed his features already during the short prelude to the song to assume a most ghastly expression of pain and terror. This—apart from such a proceeding being apt to create the opposite effect—was quite wrong, for the opening of the song is merely a sad recollection by the lover of happier times, when his beloved was still inhabiting the house he is passing.

"The night is still, the streets are silent,
'Twas in this house my true love lived."

The tragedy and horror only begin with

"There too stands a man and gazes up on high,
And wrings his hands in agony of pain."

The climax is reached with the words

"I shudder when I behold his face,
The moon reveals to me my own image."

But when this climax came, it was robbed of much of its impressiveness by the singer having anticipated it. He evidently took it for granted that his listeners knew Heine's poem and Schubert's song, or had made themselves acquainted with the words beforehand.

That is a great mistake. You should always sing as if the song you are interpreting had never been known or sung before, and you were the first to make it public. Everyone of you, I am sure, has at one time or another told a little fairy-story to a child. You know how deliberately such a story should be told, how distinctly every consonant and every syllable should be pronounced, in order that the child may grasp the meaning of what you are saying, the very moment you are saying it, so as not to lose the thread of the tale, to break the spell. Well, that's the way you should sing. Even if you know that what you are singing is the most well-known, popular, hackneyed thing, you should always imagine one person in your audience—sitting in the very last row—to whom it is something absolutely new; and that imaginary person should be the child to whom you are telling the story.

All these little details have to be thought out. The singer should even be careful in the selection of his songs. The greater

the singer's art, the more will he be able to force his hearers into momentary forgetfulness of a possible discrepancy between, for instance, his personal appearance and the sentiment or character he is endeavouring to represent. But here, too, some discretion should be exercised. Even the time of day, the scene, the occasion, should find a place among the questions to be considered by a singer when choosing a song for performance. Under unsuitable circumstances the best interpretation may not only fail to be appreciated, but may even produce an effect utterly unlooked for.

Many years ago, two or three nights after Gilbert and Sullivan's incomparable *Mikado* had been launched on its triumphal career at the Savoy, there was a big evening party at Sullivan's flat, to meet the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh. An excellent little programme of music had been gone through, and after midnight supper the whole party once more repaired to the drawing-room for some lighter music. Nearly all the principal singers from the Savoy had come over in their *Mikado* costumes. With the composer at the piano, they delighted the guests with such excerpts as "Three Little Maids from School" and "The Flowers that bloom in the Spring, tra-la," doubly fascinating then on account of their novelty.

Everybody, and not least the two Royal guests who occupied armchairs in front, enjoyed the entertainment to the utmost. The fun was at its height, when one of the guests, a celebrated contralto, famous for her rendering of ballads—I mean the style of ballads in vogue fifty years ago—was asked if she wouldn't sing one of them. She readily consented, of course, and solemnly mounted the little platform. As she stood there, motionless as a statue, her face expressing a seriousness so strangely in contrast with the mirth and laughter that had pervaded the room but a few minutes before, I noticed the two Royal programmes being brought somewhat nearer the Royal faces. There was a sudden apprehensive hush. The accompanist struck the first chords of the introduction—and the lady began to sing *The Three Fishers*! As the ditty of death and decay unfolded itself, higher and higher up went the Royal programmes. Dead silence reigned in the room; the revellers in Edgar Allan Poe's *Masque of the Red Death* were not more frozen. Until

it came to the stanza about the "Three Corpses," when little by little small noises like half-suppressed sneezes or sobs could be heard here and there, increasing in frequency and volume. When it came to the refrain, "The sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep—" it was now a little after 1 a.m.—the last "moa-o-o-ning" was drowned in vociferous applause of a character such as that ballad had never before evoked.

When we recall the definition of the word Interpretation as it refers to music and poetry ("rendering by artistic representation or performance") we shall find that the little qualification "artistic" makes all the difference in the world; inasmuch as it shows that a mere representation or performance may not necessarily be an interpretation at all, and that it requires an artist to make it such.

It follows that there must be any amount of variety in the interpretation of one and the same thing. An old Latin proverb says, *Duo si faciunt idem, non est idem*. "When two people do the same thing, it isn't the same thing." If that be true in any undertaking, how infinitely great must be the possibility of such variety when the two people of the proverb are artists! For though we speak of the "artistic temperament," as if it were something absolute and definable, we know in how many different ways such a temperament may manifest itself.

There are no two painters, who, put before the same landscape, would paint it—that is, interpret it—in the same way. There are no two actors who would interpret Hamlet in an identical manner. And there are no two singers who would sing the same song exactly alike. Maturity attained, they each have their own style, and style—as an eminent painter of the last century admirably expressed it—is the leaving out of everything superfluous.

No two artists will think the same thing superfluous. Indeed, what the one considers so, the other may deem essential. Here, too, the actor is better off than the musician. He has far greater scope for his imagination. He is given the words to do what he likes with. One actor might after long study come to the conclusion that the last lines of the monologue (at the end of the second Act of *Hamlet*) should be triumphantly exclaimed in a loud voice :

"The play's the thing

Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King."

While another, equally eminent, would make an equally great impression by almost whispering the words to himself, as if afraid of betraying the secret :

"The play's the thing . . ."

Who could say, "This is right and that is wrong?" In this case, the same result is arrived at by different means.

On the other hand, I remember a story my father told me when I was a boy, about a man who had been made very angry by a letter from his son at the University, asking him for money. In that mood he is met by an old friend who asks him : "What's the matter? Why are you thus out of sorts?"

"Well," says the other, "look at this impertinent letter I've just had from my son."

He reads out words in a quick, impatient, commanding voice : "Father, please send me some money!" "Of course," he adds, "I shan't do anything of the kind."

"Let me see the letter," pleads the benevolent friend, who was very fond of the boy. Reading the words with a gentle, appealing, affectionate inflexion, he says. "Why, my dear fellow, it's a very charming letter. He writes, 'Father, *please* send me some money'."

"Ah," comments the father. "If he writes like that, he shall have it!"

Here, without doubt, the different interpretation had a different result. Certainly the son will have thought so.

But varieties such as these are quite impossible in music. Here we are faced with absolute orders given by the composer, who says : "This is to be *forte*, this is *piano*; here you must increase, there you must decrease; here hurry, there retard." Yet this apparent clipping of the interpreter's wings is only a blessing in disguise, for it makes it possible for a singer of even inferior intelligence to "*render* by artistic representation or performance"—that is, to interpret a song. While we would not listen to a representation of the character of Hamlet by a stupid or uneducated man, we may thoroughly

enjoy the rendering of a song by a singer with a fine voice—even if he is a most uninteresting, commonplace person otherwise—as long as he masters the technique of his art, and loyally and conscientiously follows the directions given by the composer.

A loyal, reverent attitude to the composer is a thing on which too great stress cannot be laid. A work deemed worth performing should be rendered as the composer wrote it. Of course, by this I do not mean that an orchestral work or an organ fugue or a string quartet should not be played on the pianoforte. Quite the contrary. Skilful transcriptions and arrangements are as great a boon as are the reproductions of famous masterpieces of painting or sculpture, without which our knowledge of the art would be lamentably defective. There have also been cases where one great master has thought it desirable to complement the work of another; either by writing accompaniments to originally unaccompanied instrumental works, as Schumann did to Bach, or by strengthening the accompanying orchestra in a choral work, as Mozart did to Handel's *Messiah*.

As far as I know, the original text has in all such cases been allowed to remain intact. And works thus treated being obtainable in the original as well as in the complemented version, the choice is left to the personal taste of the musicians responsible for the performance.

What I mean is that the *text* of the composer should not be tampered with. Attempts have now and then been made to improve Beethoven's scores, on the plea that some instruments employed by the master—the flute, for instance—have been developed so as to allow notes to be played on them now which were impossible at the time Beethoven wrote, and that, very likely, had these notes been at the master's disposal, he would have made use of them. This may or may not be so, but it seems to me a dangerous theory to work upon; for once you begin meddling with a master work it would be difficult to know where to draw the line, and there is no saying where it would lead. Besides, every great period in the history of art has its own characteristics. A so-called full orchestra in Beethoven's time was very different from the full orchestra of

to-day, when woodwind, brass, percussion, harps and what not often outnumber the entire personnel of a grand orchestra a century ago. Moreover, if you leave Beethoven's scores untouched, his mastery of orchestration becomes all the more wonderful. There are moments—just think of that glorious climax in the third *Leonora Overture* or of the end of the *Egmont Overture*—where, considering the mere physical power of sound only, he gets results from his orchestration that no modern writer has yet surpassed.

It is hardly credible that, arrogant as are such attempts at improving Beethoven's orchestration, there exist people who go further still and actually alter a great composer's directions as to expression. Most of us know how particularly fond Beethoven was of interrupting a seemingly increasing *fortissimo* by a sudden *pianissimo*. You will recall that splendid *scherzo* in the Seventh Symphony, where he starts with an exultant *fortissimo*—evidently meaning to continue in that vein—when, all of a sudden, the *ff* on the last crotchet of the second bar is followed by a *pp* on the first crotchet of the third. The result is simply marvellous.

Some years ago I had to conduct the Seventh Symphony, as deputy for the regular conductor who was prevented from being at his post on that occasion. Can you imagine my surprise and disgust when, rehearsing the *Scherzo*, and looking forward to that sudden *pp* on the first note of the third bar, I found that *pp* appearing on the last note of the second bar—which should still have been *ff*? Stopping the orchestra indignantly, I asked: "What on earth are you doing, gentlemen?"

"We've got it so in our parts," was the answer.

"Impossible!" I said. "Let me see."

The leader handed me the part, and there, to be sure, I was flabbergasted to find the mark *pp* on the first note of the third bar actually transferred in blue pencil to the preceding note, thus not only completely spoiling Beethoven's fun, but altering and weakening the subject, which—as anybody might see—begins with the down, not the up, beat. I wonder if one should envy a man or pity him for a degree of self-estimation which could render him capable of blue-pencilling Beethoven!

This is by no means an isolated example of the lamentable lack of reverence sometimes shown to the works of the great masters of music. The utterly mistaken *tempi* one often has to listen to in the rendering of the classics—especially Mozart and Beethoven—is horrifying, sad, and deplorable; but that, after all, may only be the consequence of ignorance or the result of insufficient musical training on the part of the performer. It is the wanton, deliberate tampering with the *text* of a great composer which is unpardonable. No one among the classics was more explicit or exacting than Beethoven. Take, once more, that surpassingly beautiful *Leonora Overture No. 3*. Who has not been thrilled to the uttermost depths of his soul by those distant trumpet-calls, each ending with a long pause on the last note, and followed immediately—*without any further pause and while that last note still lingers in one's ears*—by one of the most divinely inspired phrases ever penned? After the first call, the orchestra plays it in a mysterious *pianissimo*, in the same key as the call itself. (B flat.) After the second call, more impressive still, the orchestra replies a third lower—in G flat.

At a recent performance, the conductor (an "acknowledged authority" on Beethoven, according to the papers) coolly added a "general pause" on each of those two pauses on the last note of the trumpet-call. No words can express my disappointment, my indignation. Because, of course, the sublime beauty of that low G flat with which the double-basses and 'celli enter—*while the high B flat of the trumpet-call is slowly dying away in the distance*—was lost completely. Indeed, it would have mattered little now in *what* key the orchestra had come in: the thing was irretrievably spoilt.

In most places, the audience would have given unmistakable signs of its disapproval, and the Press been unanimous in the condemnation of such practices on the part of the conductor. But here, that gentleman was vociferously applauded by the audience. The Press with (I think) one solitary exception, lauded him to the skies. The one or two papers which were bold enough timidly to admit his "occasionally taking liberties with Beethoven," declared that such liberties were those of "an intimate, an adept."

Intimate, indeed! If, a hundred years ago, an intimate of Beethoven's had dared to do such a thing in Beethoven's presence, the master—as we know him from his letters—would have flung the score at the culprit's head, thundering, "Knave, canst thou not read? Dost thou think if I had wanted those two general pauses I did not know how to put them in my score?"

Fancy an actor, tired of "To be or not to be," and thinking it too hackneyed, surprising the audience by beginning the great monologue, for a change, with

"To exist or not to exist . . ."

Or another, going one better, and considering the absence of rhyme rather a mistake on Shakespeare's part, hitting on the happy and original idea of correcting it into something like this:—

"To be or not to be—

That is what staggers me."

Take a song or an aria. How often one hears even good singers change a note into a higher one, with the object of showing the voice to better advantage or of making a phrase (generally the final cadence) more effective, so as to get a few more handfuls of applause, or perhaps even an additional recall at the end.*

"That's villainous," says Hamlet, "and shows a most pitiful ambition."

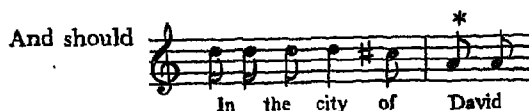
This altering of notes brings me upon a question which has ever been the subject of much controversy among musicians: Are there any rules as to the singing of recitatives? Or, rather, any rules governing the substitution now and then of notes for certain notes written by the composer?

Should, for instance, the phrase in the *Messiah*



There were shepherds

*cf "There are foolish singers who contemne the devotion they should seeke after, and affect the wantonnesse which they should shun . . . seeking for a little wordly fame, that they may lose the eternal glory." *Ornitho parvus* (A. Vorelsang. 1537. Trans. by John Dowland.) H. H.



My answer as regards the first of these two examples is as decided a No as my Yes is in regard to the second. This may be considered rather arbitrary and entirely a matter of taste, but I venture to hope that what I have to say on the subject will show that the question is only partly a matter of taste, and of arbitrariness not at all. I base my objection to the alteration in the first example, and my approval of that in the second example, on a theory which commends itself by its simplicity, and which may be explained in this manner:—

Take the note as to the changing of which (into a higher or lower note) you are in doubt, and look first at the note *preceding* it; then look at the note *following* it. If the note you wish to substitute for the printed one *lies on the way* from the preceding to the following note, you are justified in making the change. If it does *not* "lie on the way," leave it alone.

Here is our first example :



The doubtful note is the C on "Shep." The preceding note is the G below. The following note is the C. Now, does the D you wish to substitute for the C on "Shep" lie between that G and that C on the second syllable of "Shepherd?" No. Let the phrase therefore remain as written.

In the second example :



the questionable note is the A on "Da-". It *does* lie on the way from the C sharp to the A on the second syllable of "David," and it is therefore not only perfectly legitimate but even good to make the change. The phrase should be sung :



The question of taste enters when it comes to the exception to the rule. According to the rule, it would be legitimate, taking a third example from the Messiah :



to sing



- bout them

In this case, however, it would be decidedly better to leave the phrase unchanged, for we have already had four B flats in that short sentence. The A, coming pat on the F major chord, is rather refreshing. Here, as in many other cases, "let your own discretion be your tutor." But regarding the first of these three examples, I know no instance of an exception to the rule being either justifiable or advisable.

Naturally, all I have said on this subject refers to the slow, deliberate, serious recitative of oratorio and other sacred music only, and not at all to what is called *secco* recitative in opera, and which is practically no more than speech, somewhat rapidly delivered in specified musical terms. In this kind of recitative you should change the doubtful note into one above or below it at every opportunity. By doing so, you impart a certain spontaneity and freedom to the

sentences, emphasising their resemblance to the spoken word. Here is an example in the style of Mozart :



I am reaching the limit of the space allowed for this article, and fear my chat has been on kindred topics rather than on the alleged main theme of Interpretation. But surely none of my readers expected me to answer the question : "How to interpret?" If so, I should be as truly sorry for having disappointed them as I was some years ago for having been obliged to disillusion the organist of the little Parish Church of Alvie. She was a young girl of sixteen, a native of the parish, who could strum two or three tunes on the piano, and to whom I had given a few lessons in the managing of the American organ in the church. When I myself officiated as organist, during the summer months, I, of course, played a voluntary during the collection, improvising on the Psalm or hymn tunes we had just sung, or on whatever came into my head. A week or two after I had left Alvie for London, I received a letter from the young lady.

"Dear Mr. Henschel,

"Mr. Anderson wishes me to play voluntaries during collection, just as you did. Would you please let me know how you do it?"

I was touched by so much faith and innocence. The playing of an instrument—and singing, as such, is but playing on the vocal instrument in our throats—may be taught, and with patience and

perseverance brought as near perfection as is humanly possible. It is a matter of craft, of physical—I may say muscular—skill.

The mystery of what is best, imperishable in any art, lies in the soul and in the brain. If dormant, it may be awakened and fostered. If absent, it cannot be acquired by teaching. Interpretation, though but recreative, is certainly an art, or at least part of one. And art is long, and life is short, and of learning there is no end.

To have a chance of becoming an artist in the true sense of the word, the student fortunate in the possession of talent should from the outset resolve to strive for none but the highest ideals, refuse to be satisfied, either in taking or giving, with anything but the best and purest; and last, though by no means least, should resist the temptations which the prospect of popularity and its worldly advantages—frequently the result of lowering that high standard—may place in his way.

CHAPTER 3.

Even when he writes in so general a way, my father's characteristic attitude to life is clearly apparent; his impassioned musical integrity, his insistence on unswerving devotion to the highest ideals, his sense of humour—sometimes rather ironic.

Before passing on to the Brahms recollections, there are a couple of "precepts in my memory" which I would like to hand on. Our talks together were rich in gems—on his part!—and two of them have been my ideals in art and life.

"An artist's *least* good performance," he said, "should still be a fine one. He must never sink below a certain level, while always striving to reach a higher and yet a higher one."

In this connection I remember his once saying to me (much more than half-seriously) after he had sung something very finely: "Yes, I really think that if I go on working enough, I may one day be quite a good singer." He was then about seventy, and singing magnificently.

A delightful thing happened in 1928, when he was seventy-eight years old. During the Schubert centenary celebrations in London he had broadcast a Schubert programme. Shortly afterwards the B.B.C. received a letter from the Cologne Broadcasting Company, asking to be put in touch with the "young artist" who had sung so superbly, as they would like to engage him to broadcast from their studios.

"Tell them," said my father, "that the young artist first sang in Cologne just fifty-four years ago!"

Father did not only keep his youthful spirit and temperament almost till the day of his death, but the quality of his voice remained astonishingly virile and ageless. He broadcast on his eighty-fourth birthday, and it was impossible to realise that the singer was undoubtedly what is usually described as an "old, old man." "Old man" was a term that could never have applied to Father. He

never seemed to have any age at all, at any time in his life. He just—*was*.

I was struck when an undergraduate friend of mine, meeting Father at a party in London and hearing him sing, said to me afterwards: "I had an extraordinary impression of timelessness about him. I couldn't imagine him either as having been born or as dying; he seemed like one of the ancient gods who had always walked the earth, and always would."

Mary Anderson, in a charming tribute published in *The Times* a few days after Father's death, wrote: "When Henschel entered a room full of people, the very look of the man—the grizzled beard, the broad Promethean brow—the unconscious dignity of his demeanour, his simplicity, marked him as a man apart. I remember once telling a musician of my acquaintance that to-day there were hardly any artists who possessed that nameless, vivid power from within, of making their music unforgettable; he looked dubious, and said he hardly understood. One day at Lady——'s he heard Sir George accompanying himself in Schubert's *Gruppe aus dem Tartarus*, and he told me that he felt like kneeling to him, and that Henschel had shown him exactly what I meant. . . .

"He was a great-souled artist and man—how else could he so recapture and revivify the original inspiration from which a great work sprang? Singing, with him, was no mere gift of interpretation; it was a creative act. We who heard him, who knew him, realise that he was perhaps the last of the Olympians."*

But to return to precepts.

A number of friends were gathered about Father's dinner table in his Scottish home, and the conversation had turned into philosophic channels. I was maintaining that, save in the broadest sense, there could be no absolute right or wrong, and declaring (rather obviously) that what was right for one person might be quite wrong for another; and that of all idiotic clichés, "If I'd been so-and-so I'd have done thus-and-thus" seemed to me one of the silliest. Another guest insisted that certain hard and fast rules of conduct must obtain for everybody. Someone else said: "I think

*"He was the last of the Classics," said Harold Samuel.

we should try to be so fine in character that we can show others by our example what they should do."

My father, who preferred conversation of a lighter kind for table-talk, had been listening silently. Now, being asked to endorse the last opinion, he looked up and said with a strangely sweet smile, somehow conveying a kind of childlike candour, "Well, I can't help feeling that the words 'must' and 'ought' and 'should,' in relation to conduct, are to be applied *only to oneself*."

If we could all adopt this simple rule, and live according to it, how much misery and unhappiness would disappear from this tormented world.! For it is certain that most of the bad things in life—from small personal griefs to wars—have their origin in the fact of somebody not minding his or her own business!

PART IV.
THE BRAHMS RECOLLECTIONS.

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CHAPTER 1.

IN the year 1874 I reached a rather important point in my career. I got my first engagement for one of the famous Nether-Rhenish Music Festivals, then the great musical events of the year in Germany, or in the world, I might even say; for to these festivals people from all over the globe would flock in great numbers.

It was the turn of Cologne in 1874, and with no little pride and hardly less anxiety I saw my name announced for the first time in a list of soloists comprising some of the most renowned of the day.

Above all, Brahms was to be there.

For weeks beforehand my mind had been occupied with the thought of seeing face to face the great composer whose name was on every musician's lips, the man whose genius Robert Schumann had publicly proclaimed in the glowing language of an inspired prophet. And I well remember my embarrassment, and the sensation it gave me, when at last I was permitted to shake hands with him after the rehearsal of Handel's *Samson*—in which I had been engaged to sing the part of Harapha. A few kind and encouraging words soon put me at my ease, and I could give myself up to scrutinising Brahms' personal appearance.

He was broad-chested, of somewhat short stature, with a tendency to stoutness. His face was then clean-shaven, revealing a rather thick, genial underlip; the healthy and ruddy colour of his skin indicated a love of nature and a habit of being in the open air in all kinds of weather; his thick, straight brownish hair came nearly to his shoulders. His clothes and boots were not exactly of the latest pattern, nor did they fit particularly well, but his linen was spotless.

What, however, struck me most was the kindliness of his eyes. They were of a light blue, wonderfully keen and bright, with now and then a roguish twinkle in them; yet at times they were almost childlike in their tenderness. I was soon to find that the roguish twinkle corresponded to a quality in his nature which would perhaps be best described as good-natured sarcasm. A couple of illustrations will explain what I mean.

A celebrated composer had asked Brahms to be allowed to play to him from the MS. his latest composition, a violin concerto. Brahms consented to hear it and seated himself near the piano. Mr. — played his work with great enthusiasm and force, the perspiration (it was a very hot day) streaming down his face. When he had finished, Brahms got up, approached the piano, took a sheet of the manuscript between his thumb and forefinger and, rubbing it between them, exclaimed, "I say, where do you buy your music paper? First rate!"

In the evening of the day of our first meeting I found myself sitting with Brahms in a restaurant, together with four or five prominent composers who had come from their different places of abode to attend the festival. The musical proceedings of the day had been the chief topic of conversation. On one of the programmes there had figured some new songs of mine, and suddenly one of the "Herren Kapellmeister," pointing towards me, came out with: "Now just look at that lucky fellow, Henschel! He can both sing and compose, and we——" describing with his hand a circle which included Brahms— "we can only compose."

"*And not even that,*" Brahms instantly added, his countenance bearing an expression of the most perfect innocence.

He was very fond of sitting with good friends over his beer or wine or his beloved "Kaffee"—with the accent, after Viennese fashion, on the last syllable—till the small hours. After the *Samson* performance our party did not break up until half-past two in the morning. To sit late at night in a stuffy room full of tobacco smoke, for hours at a stretch, and that between two public performances, is not precisely a proceeding I could conscientiously recommend a young singer to imitate. But on that occasion nothing

would have induced me to leave the room before Brahms, so fascinated was I by his personality, so jealous of every minute of his company.

In the early spring of the following year (1875) I met Brahms again. Some letters had passed between us, relating to my singing for the Society of the Friends of Music at Vienna. At that time Brahms was the conductor of its concerts. I had been engaged to sing the part of Christ in Bach's *Passion according to St. Matthew*, and of Odysseus in Max Bruch's secular oratorio of that name, and it may be imagined how great an inspiration it was for a young musician like myself to sing under the direction of Brahms, and to be in daily and intimate intercourse with him. In anticipation of this privilege I had made arrangements for a prolonged stay in the Austrian capital.

We went for a walk together every day, mostly in the Prater, the favourite out-of-door resort of the Viennese, and it seemed a matter of no small gratification to Brahms to find himself recognised and deferentially greeted everywhere we happened to drop in for an occasional rest. The numerous public gardens where gypsy bands played especially attracted us, and it was a delight to notice the increased spirit those brown sons of the Puszta put into their music in the presence of the master who had done so much to give their beloved tunes a wider sphere of popularity.

The first of the two concerts went off beautifully. Brahms had trained the chorus with infinite care and conducted with great earnestness. It was a rare pleasure to watch the enthusiasm and at the same time the reverence and dignity he brought to bear on the performance of Bach's masterwork. Johann Sebastian was one of his gods, and I remember one day in his rooms when, seeing me notice the *Well-tempered Klavier* open on the piano, he said to me: "With that I rinse my mouth every morning."

Early in 1877 I was invited to sing at the annual St. Cecilia Festival, at Münster, Westphalia.

I arrived a few days before the festival was due to begin. I was to sing—among other things—the baritone solo in Brahms' *Triumphal Hymn*. Much to my disgust, a day or so before the

concert I caught a cold which made me dread that high F in the solo. "And behold now, the heavens opened wide." I asked Brahms if, on account of my cold, he would object to my altering that note into a more convenient one, and he said :

"Not in the least. As far as I am concerned, a thinking, sensible singer may without hesitation change a note—which for some reason or other is temporarily out of his compass—into one which he can reach with comfort; provided always the declamation remains correct and the accentuation does not suffer."

At the concert Brahms played his concerto superbly. I noted especially how he emphasised each of those tremendous shakes in the first movement by placing a short rest between the last note of one and the first small note before the next. During those short stops he would lift his hands up high, and let them come down on the keys with a force like that of a lion's paw. It was grand.

The *Triumphlied*—the difficulties of which I could appreciate when four years later I had the honour of introducing it to England at a concert I gave in the St. James' Hall—went splendidly. Brahms conducted, and the joy and gratification in his face at the end, when acknowledging the acclamations of audience, chorus and orchestra, was evidently caused as much by the consciousness of having written a great work as by its reception and appreciation. A most welcome change from the affected display of modesty or indifference often exhibited on concert platforms.

The end of February found Brahms and me together in Coblenz on the Rhine, where we were the soloists at one of the regular Symphony Concerts.

The day before the concert there had been a final full rehearsal to which the public were admitted. Brahms had played Schumann's Concerto in A Minor and missed a good many notes. So on the morning of the day of the concert he went to the hall to practise. He had asked me to follow him a little later, to rehearse the songs—his, of course—in which he was to accompany me in the evening. When I arrived I found him quite alone, seated at the piano and working away for all he was worth on Beethoven's *Choral Fantasia* and Schumann's Concerto. He was quite red in the face,

and, interrupting himself for a moment on seeing me stand beside him, said with that childlike, confiding expression in his eyes :

"Really, this is too bad. To-night, those people expect to hear something outstandingly good, and here I am likely to give them a hoggish mess. (*Schweinerei.*) I assure you I could play to-day, and with the greatest of ease, far more difficult things, with wider stretches for the fingers. My own concerto for example. But these simple diatonic runs are exasperating. I keep saying to myself, 'But, Johannes, pull yourself together. Do play decently!' No use; it's really horrid."

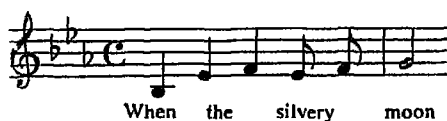
After our little private rehearsal of the songs, Brahms and I went to Councillor Wegeler's, Brahms' host, having been invited to inspect the celebrated wine-cellars of his firm, and to partake of a luncheon in the sample room afterwards. Towards the end of the repast, a sumptuous affair which Brahms relished as much as I did, a bottle of old Rauenthaler '65 was opened by our host with due ceremony. It proved to be a rare drop indeed, and we all sat in almost reverential silence, bent over the high light-green goblets which we held in close proximity to our respective noses. Wegeler at last broke the silence with the solemn words : "Yes, gentlemen, what Brahms is among the composers, this Rauenthaler is among wines." Quick as lightning Brahms exclaimed : "Ah, then let's have a bottle of Bach now !"

The concert went off well, as did the supper afterwards. Brahms was in particularly high spirits. The many proofs of sincere admiration and affection he had received during his stay in Coblenz had pleased and touched him, and he went so far as to make a speech—a very rare thing with him.

From Coblenz we went to Wiesbaden. We were quite alone in our compartment, and I had the happiness of finding him more communicative than ever before. From speaking of the events of the past days we soon drifted into talking about art in general and music in particular.

"There is no creating," he said, "without hard work. That which you would call an invention—that is to say, a thought or an idea—is simply an inspiration from above, for which I am not

responsible, which is no merit of mine. It is a present, a gift, which I ought even to despise until I have made it my own by right of hard work. And there need be no hurry about that, either. Like the seed-corn it germinates unconsciously, and in spite of ourselves. For instance, when I have found the first phrase of a song, say



I might shut the book there and then, go for a walk, do some other work, and perhaps not think of it again for months. Nothing, however, is lost. If afterwards I approach the subject again, it is sure to have taken shape. I can now begin really to work at it.

"Yet there are composers who sit at the piano with a poem before them, putting music to it from A to Z, until it is done. They write themselves into a state of enthusiasm which makes them see something finished, something important, in every bar."

After the concert that evening we had supper at the house of the Princess of Hesse-Barchfeld. Although Brahms, Ernst Franck (the genial composer and conductor who had come over from Mannheim) and I were the only non-aristocratic guests present, the affair was very charming and *gemütlich*. Brahms' neighbour at table was the handsome and fascinating wife of a well-known general: this fact, together with the fiery Rhine wine, had a most animating effect on him.

Just before we left, the Princess presented Brahms with an ebony box, to the lid of which a laurel wreath of silver was attached. Each leaf of the wreath had the title of one of Brahms' works engraved on it. He was delighted, and much amused at finding the colossal *Triumphlied* for double chorus and orchestra on one of the leaves, and, on the very next one, that sweet little lullaby of eighteen bars, *Wiegenlied*.

The following morning there was a *matinée musicale* at the house of the same Princess of Hesse-Barchfeld. The Frankfort

* The beginning of the beautiful song, "Die Mainacht," Op. 43.

String Quartet, Hugo Heerman leading, had come over for the purpose. Brahms played with them his own Quartet in C Minor, Op. 60, and then accompanied me in the longest, and to me the finest of his romances from Tieck's beautiful *Magellone*, "Wie soll ich die Freude, die Wonne denn tragen," Op. 33, No. 6.

After the *matinée* Brahms took me to the Landgravine Anna of Hesse, a princess of considerable musical talent, whom however, as he told me, he mostly admired for her simple and modest, yet cordial and affable manners. Otherwise he did not particularly care for personal contacts with the "highest spheres of society," as he called it.

On the Sunday before Shrove Tuesday we had intended to go to the masked ball at the Kursaal, and had already bought tickets. But in the afternoon Brahms came to my room in the hotel, and said: "I say! I've another idea. Let us give the tickets to the head-waiter, and we'll go to see Mr. X, which will entertain us just as well."

Mr. X was a composer of great talent and almost uncanny fertility, one of the most widely known and popular musicians of the day. No one, I am sure, would be more surprised than he himself, could he—he died in 1882, leaving a record of over two hundred published compositions—re-visit the scenes of his many triumphs, and find himself utterly and completely forgotten.

Neither in his native Germany nor in England (where his symphonies used to attract big crowds to the Crystal Palace) can his name now be found on concert programmes, except on very rare occasions as that of the composer of a little song or violin piece. Such is fame.

"You know," Brahms said to me, "I am really fond of the man, but can't help being amused at his good-natured loquacity. He is as good as a play. *Do* make him speak of Wagner; I like that especially. And ask him to show you one of his orchestral scores; they are models of what copying should be. You will see that Mr. X is an extraordinary fellow. He is not happy unless he composes a certain number of hours every day, and with all that he copies even the parts of his symphonies himself."

Well, to Mr. X's house we went, and to our satisfaction found both Mr. and Mrs. X at home.

Brahms seemed tired. He spoke little, which, however, was only natural, since both Mr. X and his wife seemed to vie with each other as to which could talk most and quickest. At last, Mr. X—who constantly reminded me of Don Bartolo without his wig—was called away into the next room by his barber, who had come to shave him. The task of entertaining us now rested on Mrs. X's shoulders alone.

"You have no idea," she said, "how hard a worker X is." (She never said "my husband.") "I am proud and happy to have at last prevailed upon him to go for a walk with our daughter every day for two hours, thus keeping him at least two hours a day from composing."

"Ah, that's good, that's very good," said Brahms, again looking as innocent as a new-born babe.

Mr. X, upon our taking leave, offered to accompany us on a little stroll through the park, during which he told us he had received an invitation to conduct one of his symphonies at a coming music festival in Silesia. Upon my speaking rather disparagingly of the musical achievements of the moving spirit of the festival (a member of the highest aristocracy who had published and produced several pretentious and very inferior compositions of his own), Brahms said to me, with the pretence of a serious rebuke in his voice: "My dear Henschel, let me warn you to be more cautious when speaking of a nobleman's compositions, for you can never know who wrote 'em!"

From Wiesbaden we went to Frankfort-on-the-Main. On arriving at the old hotel where I had been in the habit of putting up, room No. 42 was allotted to us. But while we were sitting in the tap-room over a farewell bottle of Rhine wine, the head-waiter who knew us came up to me and announced that a far better room, No. 11, had been placed at our disposal. After a cosy chat—in the course of which Brahms asked me if I knew of a very remote, quiet spot, untrodden by excursionists, where we

might spend a week or two during the summer vacation—we retired to room No. 11.

It was my instant and ardent endeavour to get to sleep before Brahms did, as I knew from past experience that his impertinently healthy habit of snoring would mean death to any hope of sleep on my part.

My delight at seeing him take up a book and start reading in bed was equalled only by my horror when, after a few minutes, I saw him blow out the light of his candle. Some seconds later the room was fairly ringing with unearthly noises issuing from his nasal and vocal organs. What should I do? I was in despair. for I wanted sleep; early next morning I had to leave for Berlin. A sudden inspiration made me remember room No. 42. I got up, went downstairs to the porter's lodge, and, not without some difficulty, succeeded in rousing him from a sound sleep. Explaining cause and object, I made him open room No. 42 for me.

After a good night's rest, I returned early in the morning to the room in which I had left Brahms. He was awake, and looking at me affectionately, with the familiar little twinkle in his eye and mock seriousness in his voice, he said: "Oh, Henschel, when I awoke and found your bed empty, I said to myself, There, he's gone and hanged himself!

"But really," he added, well knowing what had driven me away, "why didn't you throw a boot at me?"

The idea of my throwing a boot at Brahms!

During our hurried breakfast—Brahms, returning to Vienna, also had to take an early train—we again spoke of the coming summer, and he seemed rather attracted by the glowing description I gave him of the island of Rügen, in the Baltic Sea. I had visited this island before, but it was quite unknown to Brahms. We parted with a hearty "Auf Wiedersehn!" which made me very happy in anticipation.

There were only a few more concerts during the next two months or so, and the long and eagerly looked for holiday with Brahms drew nearer and nearer. A note from him told me of his

arrival at Sassnitz, and as soon as I had packed my bag and taken leave of my mother and sisters, I started out to join him.

During the unforgettable time which followed, I kept a diary and made entries every evening.

Outside his native and adopted countries (Germany and Austria) Brahms' works are nowhere better nor more widely known than in England. I doubt if anything has been written about him which, in soundness, appreciation and discriminating judgment, can compare with Henry Hadow's admirable article, "Brahms and the Classical Tradition," published in the *Contemporary Review* soon after the master's death.

Yet Brahms never having visited England, and the number of those who knew him at all intimately being a very small one, I venture to hope that this Journal will be not unwelcome to the many who, familiar with Brahms the Composer, would fain know a little more about Brahms the Man.

CHAPTER 2.

THE JOURNAL.

SASSNITZ, ON THE ISLAND OF RUGEN.

Saturday, July 8, 1876.

Arrived here last night. The diligence was delayed by one of the heaviest thunderstorms I can remember, and it was not until half-past eleven that we pulled up at the little hostelry, which also contains the post-office. But in spite of the inclemency of the weather and the late hour, Brahms was there to welcome me, and we had an hour's chat in the coffee room. Then he returned to his lodgings down in the village, and I came up here to the hotel on the Fahrnberg—where Brahms is going to have his mid-day and evenings meals regularly.

Sunday, July 9.

Early yesterday morning Brahms came up to go bathing with me. There was a fine surf on, and the temperature of the water being rather high we stayed in it for nearly half an hour, enjoying ourselves immensely. I greatly admired Brahms' burly, well-knit and muscular body, though I fear it is too much inclined to stoutness.

He drew my attention to the possibility of keeping one's eyes wide open when diving. It is not only possible, he said, but very agreeable and strengthening for the eyes. I at once followed his advice to try it, succeeding immediately, and we greatly amused ourselves by throwing little copper coins into the water and diving for them.

In the evening we sat together on the Terrace of the Fahrnberg. I showed him the new series of Moritz Hauptmann's letters.*

After we had read a few, he said: "How discreet one ought to be in writing letters. Some day they may be printed. Who

*Hauptmann was a rather dry and academical composer, precentor of the church of St. Thomas in Leipzig up to his death in 1868.

knows? There's hardly anything in these letters which would not read just as well if their contents were reversed. To be sure, it is an enviable gift to be able to write clever letters, but only letters of purely scientific purport are, in my opinion, of real value to any apart from those to whom they were written."

I drew Brahms' attention to a letter sent to Professor R.* I expressed my surprise at the lenient and amiable way in which Hauptmann spoke of that gentleman's compositions.

"Well," said Brahms, "you see, R. had very aristocratic connections and Hauptmann . . . a very delicate nature."

In the course of our talk, a personal friend of Brahms—one of the greatest virtuosos of the day—was mentioned. "There are people," said Brahms, "who can talk and talk about the most unlikely, impossible thing until they actually believe it themselves. It's what I would call Twaddle. The other day, for instance, I played the last movement of my C Minor Quartet. A friend detected in it a certain resemblance to Mendelssohn's Trio in C Minor, without realising that what in Mendelssohn is theme itself is—with me—simply an accompanying figure. My friend asked me—in all seriousness, mind—'Now, am I not right: you wanted to show what *you* could do with that theme?' How silly!"

Two stories which Brahms told me I write down, since they show what a tender and sympathetic heart he has. Both stories refer to Mr. N.†

"With us in Vienna," Brahms began, "it frequently happens that, though officially obliged to deliver all letters at the doors of the respective flats to which they are addressed, the postmen leave the letters with the concierge who, as you know, has his little lodgings in the souterrain. Well, Mr. N., who lived on the fourth floor, once received a letter in that way, twenty-four hours later than he ought to have had it.

"Without warning, N. lodged a complaint with the General Postmaster, who ordered the matter to be investigated. In the

*An able but decidedly mediocre composer of good birth, who at that time occupied a prominent position as teacher at one of the Musical Institutions of Berlin.

†A well-known writer and commentator on music, then living in Vienna.

meantime a colleague of the poor postman had succeeded in persuading Mr. N.'s servant-girl to take the blame upon herself. Nothing could happen to her, it was urged, while the postman, a married man with a family, would surely be dismissed. Consequently, when the post office commissioners appeared at N.'s house to ascertain the exact facts of the case, the servant-girl stepped forward, boldly, declaring it was she who had omitted to deliver the letter, which had been in her pocket for those twenty-four hours. And the postman was saved."

Brahms' whole face beamed with joy as he told the story, and he could not praise highly enough the action of the brave, generous girl.

The second story is equally charming.

"N. and I," said Brahms, "met at the same table in a certain coffee house regularly on two or three evenings in the week, and it always used to embarrass me greatly when N. suspiciously scrutinised his bill, questioning the waiter about this or that little item which he was not sure of having had, etc.

"One evening, when this had happened again, the waiter came close up to N. and in a voice trembling with excitement and indignation whispered: 'I beg of you, Mr. N., not to mistrust me. I could not live if I thought you doubted my honesty.' Then he retired. N. got up without changing a muscle in his face, and left. A little later, when I went home myself, I gave the waiter an unusually large *douceur*, and said, 'This . . . is . . . from the other gentleman as well'."

Brahms is looking splendid. His solid frame, the healthy dark-brown colour of his face, the thick hair just a little sprinkled with grey, all make him appear the very image of strength and vigour. He walks about here as he pleases, generally with his waistcoat unbuttoned and his hat in his hand, always with clean linen, but without collar or necktie. These he dons at *table d'hôte* only. His whole appearance vividly recalls some of the portraits of Beethoven. His appetite is excellent. He eats with great gusto, and in the evening drinks his three glasses of beer, never omitting to finish off with his beloved "Kaffee."

July 10.

Yesterday afternoon I spent nearly three hours in Brahms' rooms. He showed me some new songs he had written, and asked if I could suggest a short way of indicating that a phrase in one of them was not his own.

"I have," he said, "taken this charming *motif* from Scarlatti



as the theme of a song I composed to one of Goethe's poems, and should like to acknowledge my indebtedness." I proposed, as the best and simplest way, that he should merely place Scarlatti's name at the end of the phrase in question.*

He also showed me the manuscript of an unpublished song and the first movement of a Requiem Mass, both by Schubert, enthusiastically commenting on their beauty.

The first two issues of the Bach Society's publication of cantatas were lying on the table, and he pointed out to me how badly the accompaniments were often arranged for the piano; how, in fact, the endeavour to bring out as nearly as possible every individual part of the orchestra had rendered the arrangement well-nigh unplayable for any but a virtuoso.

"The chief aim," he said, "of a pianoforte arrangement of orchestral accompaniments must always be to be easily playable. Whether the different parts move correctly, that is, in strict accordance with the rules of counterpoint, does not matter in the least."

Then we went together through the full score of Mozart's *Requiem*, which he had undertaken to prepare for a new edition of that master's works. I admired the great trouble he had taken in the revision of the score. Every note of Süssmayer's was most carefully distinguished from Mozart's own.

It is a wonderful experience to have this man's company all to myself for so long a time. During our stay Brahms never speaks of anything which does not really interest him, says nothing common-

*This was done, and the spirited, humorous song afterwards published as No. 5 of Op. 72 (Simrock).

place or superfluous, except at the *table d'hôte* when he purposely talks of hackneyed things, such as the weather, food, the temperature of the water, excursions, etc.

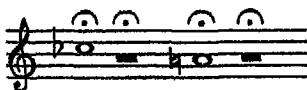
July 11.

I bought a strong hammock yesterday, and Brahms and I went into the lovely beech wood and hung it up between two trees, on a spot from which we could see the sea far below us through the foliage. We both managed to climb into it simultaneously, an amusing though by no means easy task to accomplish. Having comfortably established ourselves in it, we enjoyed a very agreeable hour or two of *dolce far niente*. Brahms was in an angelic mood, and went from one charming, interesting story to another, in which the gentler sex played a not unimportant part.

In the afternoon we resolved to go on an expedition to find his bullfrog pond, of which he had spoken to me for some days. His sense of locality not being very great, we walked on and on across long stretches of waste moorland. Often we heard the weird call of bullfrogs in the distance, but he would say: "No, that's not *my* pond yet," and on we walked.

At last we found it, a tiny pool in the midst of a wide plain grown with heather. We had not met a human being the whole way, and this solitary spot seemed out of the world altogether.

"Can you imagine," Brahms began, "anything more sad and melancholy than this music, the undefinable sounds of which for ever and ever move within the pitiable compass of a diminished third?"



"Here we can realise how fairy tales of enchanted princes and princesses have originated. . . . Listen! There he is again, the poor King's son with his yearning, mournful C flat!"*

It was a very warm evening and we stretched ourselves out in the low grass, lighted cigarettes, and lay listening in deepest silence

*It is interesting to note that in Brahms' songs dating from this period this interval frequently occurs.

for fully half an hour. Not a breath of wind stirred. Then we leaned over the pond, caught little baby frogs and let them jump into the water again from a stone. This greatly amused Brahms, especially when the little creatures, happy to be in their element once more, hurriedly swam away, using their nimble legs most gracefully and according to all the rules of the natatory art. When they thought themselves quite safe, Brahms would tenderly catch one up again in his hand, and heartily laugh with pleasure on giving it back its freedom.

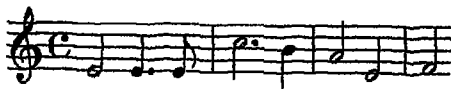
During our walk homeward we spoke almost exclusively of musical matters, and he said: "You must practise more gymnastics, my dear chap; four-part songs, string quartets, variations, etc. That will be beneficial to your opera, too."*

As we parted for the night, he called after me: "Come for me to-morrow morning, to go bathing. And bring new songs, opera score, or other beautiful things."

How he *does* like to tease! So this morning I brought him three new songs of mine.

The afternoon was again spent in the hammock. On the way home we came to talk of Wagner's trilogy, *The Ring of the Nibelungs*. I had just spoken of some exquisitely beautiful places in the first act of *The Valkyrie*, and of the fresh and breezy song of Siegfried—"From the wood forth into the world fare."

"Certainly," said Brahms, "these are fine things. But I can't help it—somehow or other, they do not interest me. What you hummed a moment ago



is no doubt beautiful; and when Siegmund in the *Valkyrie* pulls the sword out of the tree, that's fine, too. But it would, in my opinion, be *really* powerful and carry one away if it all concerned—let us say the young Buonaparte, or some other hero who stands nearer to our sensibilities, has a closer claim to our affection.

*I was engaged at the time in writing a very tragic opera!

"And then that stilted, bombastic language!" He took a copy of the text-book. "Listen :

An Brünnhild's Felsen
 Fahret vorbei :
 Der dort noch lodert,
 Weiset Loge nach Walhall!
 Denn der Götter Ende
 Dämmert nun auf;
 So—werf' ich den Brand
 In Walhall's prangende Burg.*"

He recited the words with greatly exaggerated pathos. "If I read this to a counting-house clerk, I am sure it would make a tremendous impression. "So—werf"—ich den Brand. . . ." I do not understand this kind of thing. What really does happen about the ring? Do *you* know? And those endless and tedious duets!

"Look at Goethe's *Tasso* even. A masterpiece of the first rank, every word is pure gold. Yet the long duets in it, though fine reading, prevent the play from being interesting as a drama."

July 12.

I went to Brahms' room last night. He had been reading, but putting away his book he gave me a cordial welcome and began looking through my new manuscript songs. He took up the one in E flat ("Where Angels Linger" †) and said, "Now, there's a charming song. In some of the others you seem to me too easily satisfied. One ought never to forget that by perfecting *one* piece more is gained and learned than by beginning or half-finishing a dozen. Let it rest, let it rest, and keep going back to it and working at it, over and over again, until it is a complete, finished work of art, until there is not a note too much or too little, not a bar you could improve on. Whether it is beautiful also, is an entirely different matter, but perfect it *must* be. You see, I am rather lazy, but once begun I never cool down over a work until it is perfected, unassailable."

*By Brynhild's rock then, take ye the road. Who still there flameth, Loge, show him to Walhall. For the end of the gods is dawning at last; thus—throw I the torch into Walhall's glittering walls.

†Afterwards published in Op. 34. (Bote & Bock.)

Thus Brahms continued speaking, drawing in the most amiable way my attention to this little defect, that little blemish. I sat happy and silent, careful not to interrupt this, to me, so precious lesson.

July 13.

I asked him yesterday if he had thought of going to Bayreuth in August, to the inauguration performances of *The Ring of the Nibelungs*. "I am afraid," he said, "it's too expensive. I have heard, repeatedly heard, *Rheingold* and *Valkyrie* at Munich, and confess it would interest me deeply, but—well, we'll think of it."

Then, taking up the volume of Hauptmann's letters I had lent him, and pointing to one of them, he said: "Just look. Do you see these asterisks instead of a name?" I said I did, and read the whole sentence, which described a certain composer ("*****") as a rather haughty young man.

"That's *me*," said Brahms amusedly. "When I was a very young man I played my Sonata in C to Hauptmann, at Göttingen. He was not very complimentary about it; in fact, had much fault to find with it, which I, a modest youth at that time, accepted in perfect silence. I afterwards heard that my silence had been interpreted and complained of as haughtiness. I must say, the more I read of these letters the clearer it becomes to me that they are written with a certain consciousness of importance. Beethoven would have laughed if anyone, seeing in one of his letters a remark on any subject whatever, had taken this as proving the justice of such remark.

"But there are people who, never having accomplished anything really great themselves, sit down at their writing-desks in a peevish, sulky temper, pulling to pieces—even when praising—everything they can lay hold of. To twaddle about Bach or Beethoven, as is done in the letters to Hauser, in a chattering, feuilletonistic way, is wholly unnecessary. They are too great for that kind of thing."

July 14.

Last night we were downstairs in the coffee-room having supper, when someone in the adjoining dining-hall suddenly began

to play Chopin's Study in A Flat on the piano. I sprang up, intending to put a stop to it, exclaiming, "Oh, these women!" "That is no woman," interposed Brahms. I went into the hall to look, and found he was right. "Yes," he said, "in this respect I am hardly ever mistaken. And it is by no means an easy thing to distinguish, by the sense of hearing alone, a feminine man from a masculine woman!"

July 15.

Yesterday morning I took to Brahms the orchestral score of Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*. In the afternoon he said to me, "Why did you bring it to me?" (He had particularly asked me for it!) Brahms went on: "The thing interests and fascinates one, and yet properly speaking is not always pleasant. With the *Tristan* score it is different. If I look at that in the morning, I am cross for the rest of the day."*

To-day I read out from a Berlin paper the news of the death at Bayreuth of a member of the Wagner orchestra. "The first corpse," said Brahms dryly.

July 17.

Yesterday I was with Brahms from noon until eleven at night without interruption. He was in excellent spirits. We had our swim in the sea, and again found much amusement in diving for little red pebbles. After the mid-day dinner Brahms was lying in my room, in the hammock which I had secured between window and door, while I read to him Meilhac's comedy, *L'Attaché*.

*I well remember wondering at the time just what meaning Brahms intended to convey by these words. My old friend, Max Kalbeck, editor of the *Neues Tagblatt* in Vienna, who published excerpts from my diary in his paper, made the following comment on them:

"This sentence needs an explanation, since it could easily be interpreted as meaning that *Tristan*, in contrast to the 'not always pleasant' *Ring of the Nibelungs*, had pleased Brahms very much. So much, indeed, that it made him cross with envy. We know from personal experience that Brahms, though warmly acknowledging the many musical beauties of the work, had a particular dislike for *Tristan*. As for envy, he never in his life envied any one. In Wagner he admired, above all, the magnitude of his intentions and his energy in carrying them out. The Bayreuth Festival Theatre he hailed as a national affair. We believe the chief reason why Brahms never went to Bayreuth is that the performances always happened at a season when, after long and arduous creative work, he was wont to give himself up entirely to out-of-door life in the country."

Following the usual coffee at a coffee house on the beach, we went for a long stroll in the Hansemann Park, near Crampas.

We spoke of Carl Loewe. Brahms thinks highly of his ballads and Serbian songs. "Though," he added, "I regret to say that Loewe is much overrated with us in Vienna. He is placed side by side with Schubert in his songs, and above Schubert in his ballads. They overlook the fact that what with the one is genius, is with the other merely talented craft. . . .

"In writing songs," he cautioned me, "you must endeavour to invent, simultaneously with the melody, a healthy and powerful bass. You stick too much to the middle parts. For instance, there's that song in E flat—" referring to *Where Angels linger*—"you have hit upon a very charming middle part, and the melody too, is lovely. But that isn't all, is it? And then, my dear friend, let me counsel you. No heavy dissonances on the unaccentuated parts of the bar, please! That is weak. I am very fond of dissonances, you'll agree; but on the heavy, accentuated parts of the bar, and then let them be resolved easily and gently."

Speaking of Schubert's setting of Goethe's songs, he said: "Schubert's *Suleika* songs are to me the only instances where the power and beauty of Goethe's words have been enhanced by the music. All of Goethe's other poems are so perfect in themselves that no music can improve them."

Passing from music to literature, he remarked: "Paul Heyse used to be one of the most charming men imaginable. He was beautiful and exceptionally amiable, and I hardly know of any one who, suddenly entering a room, would illuminate it by his personality in the way Heyse did.

"Bodenstedt is greatly overrated. His poetry is my special aversion. Geibel, on the other hand, seems to me not appreciated enough."

*Perhaps I may be allowed to interrupt the diary for a moment, to draw the reader's attention to the discretion and judiciousness with which Brahms selected the words for his songs.

*It must be remembered that my father wrote this during the Victorian Ballad period. H. H.

If we look at the texts to his vocal music, of which there exists a vast mass, we shall find that the sources from which he drew his inspiration have in themselves been inspired to a greater or lesser degree. All his songs, duets, quartets, etc., are set to beautiful, significant, worthy poems.

If one of the chief aims of art be to elevate, to raise mankind for the time being above the commonplace routine of life, above paltry everyday thoughts and cares—in short, from things earthy to things celestial—surely such aim should be discernible even in the smallest form of the expression of art.

Just as the beauties of Nature, testifying to the incomprehensible greatness of the divine power, reveal themselves as convincingly in the little primrose as in the huge trees of the Yosemite Valley, in the sweet prattling of a brooklet as in the roaring thunder of Niagara, in the lovely undulations of the Scottish hills as in the awe-inspiring heights of the Himalaya, so beauty of soul, honesty of purpose and purity of mind can shine as brightly in the shortest song as in the longest symphony.

No true artist in the realm of music will debase his muse by wedding it to sentimental trash, as far removed from poetry as a mole-hill from Mount Parnassus; though it is often difficult, especially for young people, to distinguish sentimentality from sentiment.

Sentimentality may be described as superficial, aimless pity; affected, unreal, unwholesome emotion. Sentiment, on the other hand, is true emotion; it is the feeling that grows naturally out of sympathetic contemplation of a thing; and it is the sentiment, not the thing, which we ought first to look for—even in a little song—as a fit object for poetic and musical expression.

The spirit of a true artist will not allow itself to be moved by versifications of penny-a-line newspaper reports, such as the capsizing of a pleasure-boat with two hapless lovers in it, or the death by starvation of a poor old seamstress ready to meet her lover in heaven, or effusions of a similar kind, generally ending in pseudo-religious inferences and exhortations little short of blasphemy.

The pale, hungry little boy outside the window of a confectioner's shop, observing inside the rich, ruddy little fellow eating his fill—that is not poetry, even if put into faultless verse and rhyme. It is simply a fact, and a sad one too; a fine poetic mind, contemplating it, might produce the most beautiful sentiments of compassion, tenderness and love; but to let the poor little chap march straightway to heaven, to the *fortissimo* accompaniment of triplets on the last page of a ballad—that is mockery, cruel mockery and sentimentality.

After supper Brahms and I sat in the dark, quite alone, on the terrace of the Fahrberg. Our conversation soon took a more serious turn. He spoke of friendship and of men, and said he believed very little in either.

"How few true men there are in the world!" he exclaimed. "The two Schumanns, Robert and Clara, they are two true, beautiful *Menschenbilder*.* Knowledge, achievement, power, position—nothing can outweigh this: to be a beautiful *Menschenbild*. Do you know Allgeyer† in Munich? There you have one, too."

Brahms began to talk with touching warmth of the time when in Allgeyer's house at Karlsruhe he wrote his *Mainacht* and the D Minor movement of his *Requiem*. "I sometimes regret," he said to me after some moments of silence, "that I did not marry. I ought to have a boy of ten now; that would have been nice. But when I was of the right age to marry I lacked the position to do so. And now it is too late."

Speaking of this probably revived reminiscences of his own boyhood, for he continued: "Only once in my life have I played truant and shirked school, and that was the vilest day I have ever experienced. When I came home I got a solid hiding from my father who had already been informed of it.

"He was a dear old man, very simple and most unsophisticated. I must give you an illustration.

*"Images of man."

†An engraver and photographer with a great love for music; intimate friend of the painter Anselm Feuerbach, and one of a small circle of musicians, painters and poets then living in Munich, a circle including Hermann Levi, Franz Lenbach, Paul Heyse, Wilhelm Busch.

"You know he was a double-bass player in the Municipal Orchestra of Hamburg, and in his leisure hours tried to increase his scanty income by copying music.

"One fine day he was sitting in his room at the top of our house, with the door wide open, absorbed in writing out the parts from an orchestral score, when in walked a tramp, begging. My father looked up at him quickly, without interrupting his work, and said in his very pronounced Hamburg dialect :

"I cannot give you anything, my dear man; besides, don't you know its very wrong to come into a room in this way? How easily you might have taken my overcoat that's hanging in the hall. Get out, and don't you do it again!"

The tramp humbly apologised and withdrew.

A few hours later, when my father wanted to go for a walk, the overcoat of course had disappeared."

Brahms then touched upon his relations with the members of his family, and told me he still supported his old stepmother. With his sister he had little in common. Their interests had always been too far apart. Between his brother, whom he likewise supported, and himself, there existed no intercourse whatever. . . .

The other day I happened to hum the theme of the *Andante* from his *Quartet in C Minor*. He seemed rather to like my doing so, for when it came to the place



he accompanied my humming with gentle movements of his hand, as if beating time to it. At last he said smiling: "I am not at all ashamed to own that it gives me the keenest pleasure if a song, an adagio, or anything of mine has turned out particularly good. How must those gods have felt, whose daily bread it was to write things like the *St. Matthew Passion*, *Don Giovanni*, *Fidelio*, the *Ninth Symphony*! What I cannot understand is how people like myself can be vain. As much as we men who walk upright are above the creeping things of the earth, so are these gods above us. It would be loathsome to me, if it were not so ludicrous, to hear

colleagues of mine praise me to my face in such an exaggerated manner."

Thus he went on. It was no longer modesty. It was humility. I took good care not to disturb his mood by a single word.

Soon he smiled again, and remarked that he considered the *Agitato* from his still unpublished Quartet in B Flat the most amorous, affectionate thing he had written.

When we parted that night, he said: "You *will* write to me from Bayreuth, won't you? I know you will rave about it, and I don't blame you. I confess *Walküre* and *Götterdämmerung* have a great hold on me. For *Rheingold* and *Siegfried* I do not much care. If I only knew what becomes of the Ring and what Wagner means by it! Perhaps the Cross? Hebbel, in his *Nibelunge*, has dared it, and it may be Wagner's meaning too. I am by no means a fanatic in my devotion to the Cross, but at least that would be an idea to indicate the end of the reign of the gods."

July 18.

Yesterday, after our usual swim, we were leisurely strolling to the Fahrberg for dinner when a button on Brahms' shirt suddenly came off. As it was the one which served to hold the collar in its place, Brahms was greatly embarrassed. I proposed to help him out and we went to my room. There I took out of my valise a little box containing sewing materials, given to me by my mother for travelling. The amusing situation of my sewing the button on Brahms' shirt while he had it on again recalled memories of his youth.

"When I went on my first journey," he said laughing, "my mother also put a little box like that into my bag, and showed me how to use its contents. But—I remember quite well—when I tore a hole in my trousers I repaired it with sealing wax. It didn't last long, though."

At luncheon, as it was my last day, we had a bottle of champagne between us. In the afternoon, the other guests having either retired to their rooms or gone on excursions, Brahms played the accompaniments to some songs for me. Since our arrival this was the first time that he had touched the key-board and that I had

sung. I began with Brahms' *Mainacht*. Then came a Schubert song and Beethoven's cyclus, *To the Absent Beloved*. When we had ended we were surprised to find that all of the adjoining rooms had filled with listeners. Mine host of the Fahrnborg was greatly touched, and thanked Brahms for the honour he had done to his hotel.

IN THE TRAIN TO BERLIN.

July 19.

This morning at five o'clock I left Sassnitz. Strangely enough, it again poured in torrents, as on the night of my arrival. A horrid, chilly morning. Brahms was up at the Fahrnborg a little before five, and to my delight accompanied me in the diligence as far as Lancken, some three miles from Sassnitz.

There he got out, we shook hands, and parted. For a long time I looked after him out of the carriage window, in spite of the wind and the still pouring rain. It was a picture never to be forgotten. As far as the eye could reach, nothing but moor and clouds and—Brahms.

Here closes the Journal. During the twenty-one years of undisturbed friendship that followed, our contact had to be mostly by letter, as the Channel—and later on, the Atlantic—separated us bodily.

I will now add what further recollections of the great composer I have preserved.

CHAPTER 3.

In 1878 Brahms had considerably changed his outward appearance by growing a long and flowing beard, in the frame of which his face has become familiar to the last and present generations.

Our first meeting was marked by an amusing incident, illustrative of his ever-abiding sense of fun. At the end of that year I was on an extended recital tour through Austria and Hungary, with my friend, Ignaz Brüll, the composer and pianist. We started in Vienna. Having arrived only a day or two before the first recital I had not yet seen Brahms. At the end of the concert Brüll and I were receiving the congratulations of friends in the artists' room when I suddenly saw a man unknown to me. He was rather stout, of middle height, with long hair and full beard. In a very deep and hoarse voice he introduced himself as "Musik-director Müller," and made a very stiff and formal bow. I was on the point of returning it with equal gravity, but an instant later we all found ourselves laughing heartily at the perfect success of Brahms' "disguise."

Of subsequent reunions, two have been vividly impressed on my mind. Hitherto, my wife had met this great and admired friend only occasionally. In order that she should have an opportunity of knowing him more familiarly we travelled to Vienna in 1894, for the sole purpose of spending a few days in Brahms' company.

On our arrival in Vienna, rather late on the evening of April 23, we found a note from Brahms awaiting us at our hotel: "If not too tired after your journey, do come to us, quite close by, at the Musik-Verein restaurant. Just as you are, informally, in your travelling clothes."

Who could resist the temptation? At the indicated place we found a little party of men and women; mostly members of the *Tonkünstler-Verein* (Tone-Artists' Union) gathered together, as usual, after one of their weekly meetings. Brahms was in excellent spirits and gave us a most cordial welcome. He was surrounded, as always on such occasions, by a host of admiring ladies, young and

elderly, in regard to whose charms and homage his susceptibilities had not in the least lessened with the advancing years.

Early the following morning we went to his rooms. He received us, as was his wont with friends, irrespective of sex, attired in a short jacket of which the lowest button only was put to its proper use; without waistcoat or shirt collar, and in slippers. The coffee-machine—he always made his own coffee in the morning—was still standing on the table. The air of the large yet cosy room was filled with the delicious fragrance peculiar to Viennese coffee, the sun shone brightly through the large windows, and the whole atmosphere was one of quiet inward happiness, contentment and ease.

Our host began to ransack drawers and cupboards and shelves for things he thought might interest and entertain us. Suddenly, with that dear familiar twinkle in his eyes and a long-drawn "A-a-ah!" he motioned us to settle down to a treat which apparently he had in store for us. Smilingly and with mock seriousness he opened a large portfolio and showed and read to us, with great gusto, the famous letters of Richard Wagner to the milliner. He had bought the collection recently and seemed very proud of the precious possession, chuckling with amusement as he went from one amazing letter to another.

We left Vienna after charming, intimate days with him and our mutual friends—Ignaz Brüll, Max Kalbeck, Carl Goldmark, and Johann Strauss, whose "Blue Danube" Valse Brahms often protested he would have given much to have written himself.

Only once more was I privileged to see the great man in the flesh. That was in January, 1896, when Brahms, Edvard Grieg, Arthur Nikisch and myself spent a delightful evening at one of Leipzig's favourite restaurants.

Brahms, stouter than I had ever seen him before, was in the merriest of moods and did ample justice to the excellent beer of Munich brew, consuming an astounding quantity before we parted, long after midnight. Nothing seemed to indicate the approach of the mortal disease which was to take hold of him so soon afterwards, and little did Nikisch and I dream that our next meeting would be among the mourners at Brahms' funeral.

It was in the evening of April 3, 1897, that I arrived in Vienna, too late to see my dear friend alive. He had breathed his last that morning.

I hurried to the death-chamber, which had been transformed into a *chapelle ardente*. The arrangements were those usual in Catholic countries: a plentiful display of silver crosses on draperies of black velvet and huge brass candelabra with burning tall wax candles. They presented a strange contrast to the simplicity of the life and habits of the master (who had been a Protestant). One was somewhat reconciled to the inappropriateness of the official decorations by the beautiful flowers which love and admiration had piled up in great and fragrant masses on the floor beneath the canopy until they reached high above the coffin, almost completely hiding it from sight.

The Tuesday following (April 6) was the day of the funeral. As if Nature wished to present an image of the character of Brahms' music—combining, as it does, the gentle with the severe—cold winds of winter alternated with balmy breezes of spring.

From early morning on, friends and deputations carrying wreaths and flowers and palm branches followed each other in constant succession up the familiar three flights of stairs to the master's apartments. The place before the house of mourning in the Karls-gasse began to fill with people ready to join in the procession. By noon nearly the whole of the street and the open space in front of the adjoining Karlskirche were one mass of humanity. All musical Vienna seemed assembled, and the extraordinarily large number of eminent men and women who had come from far and near to pay their last tribute of devotion to what had been mortal of Johannes Brahms must have conveyed some idea of his greatness and popularity even to those who had perhaps not quite realised either.

One could not help being reminded of the historic answer the old peasant woman gave to the stranger who happened to arrive in Vienna on the day of Beethoven's funeral.

"Whose funeral is this?" asked the wondering man.

"Why, don't you know?" was the reply. "They are a-buryin' the *General of the Musicians*."

At last, the coffin appeared in the doorway. Amid reverential and most impressive silence it was lifted on to the open funeral car. To its lid were fastened two gigantic wreaths, one sent by the composer's native city, the free town of Hamburg, the other by the corporation of Vienna, the home of his adoption. The procession, headed by a standard-bearer in old Spanish costume riding on a black horse, started its melancholy journey.

Behind the standard-bearer came six riders carrying lighted tapers on long poles, and they, too, were in Spanish costume and mounted on coal-black horses. The rather lugubrious impression created was relieved by a wonderful sight, a succession of six, high open funeral cars, each loaded to the very top with beautiful fresh flowers, laurels, palms, their many-coloured ribbons floating down to the ground. The sun, which had come out gloriously, shone on a huge moving garden, as it were; a spectacle as lovely as it was solemn. Before the building of the "Society of the Friends of Music" the procession halted. The doors and pillars were draped in black cloth. On each side of the portal, from metal bowls resting on the top of high candelabra and filled with ignited spirit of wine, blue flames were flickering with a subdued, mystical light. Underneath a canopy the "Sing-Verein" which had so often sung under the inspiring direction of Brahms now sang his own beautiful part-song, *Farewell*.*

As the lovely strains rang out into the vernal air, there could be heard from the neighbouring trees the merry twittering of birds whose song seemed to have been kindled as much by the unwonted occurrence as by the approach of spring. After a short choral service in the old church in the Dorotheër Gasse, the cemetery was reached. Another touching farewell, another song—and the mortal remains of Johannes Brahms were lowered into their last resting-place, close to those of Beethoven and Schubert.

I have forgotten the name of the preacher who delivered the funeral oration in the church, but the echo of his eloquent words is still ringing in my ears.

* Op. 93A, No. 4.

There have at all times lived great artists who were small men. In Brahms both the man and the artist aspired to high and lofty ideals. It was never his aim or ambition to gain for himself, through cheap and dazzling play with tones or "catchy" tunes, the quickly withering crowns of popular favour.

Though undisguisedly delighted when finding himself appreciated and acclaimed, he coveted neither fame nor applause. He was of a very simple, kind, child-like disposition. He loved children, and to make them happy was a source of pure happiness to him.

He loved the poor, to whom his heart went out in sympathy and pity. He hated show of charity. But where he could comfort in silence those who suffered in silence, those who struggled against undeserved misfortune, the sick and the helpless, there the man—so modest and sparing and unpretentious in his own wants—became a benefactor, ready for sacrifice.

No better summing-up of Brahms' character and personality has been written than that contained in the words of his and my old friend, Franz Wüllner: "He has left us a precious inheritance, the noble example of a rare truthfulness and simplicity in art and life, of a relentless severity towards himself, of a hatred of self-conceit and pretence, of a high-minded, inflexible, unwavering artistic conviction.

"To him may be truly applied Goethe's fine words in his Epilogue to Schiller's *Lay of the Bell*,

With mighty steps his soul advanced

Towards the ever True—Good—Beautiful."

PART V.

“THE ALLTNACRICHE.”

PART V.—“THE ALLTNACRICHE.”

CHAPTER 1.

In the summer of 1939 I was staying, as is so often my good fortune, with Sir D. Y. Cameron in his lovely house near Stirling. One still evening we were talking in the garden, and drifted into spoken thoughts of his beautiful and remarkable wife—who had died a few years before—and of my father.

“How strange and mysterious,” mused Sir D.Y., “how strange and mysterious are the ways and changes and developments of life. I think of your father, whose life was so long spent in the light of public acclamation, of travel, of comings and goings among the great and brilliant of his day, himself one of the most dynamic of them all—and how, more and more, he turned back to these Scottish hills he loved so well. Until at last their silence and the speech of their trees and moors and rivers had more to say to him than all those other voices. . . .

“And that his grave should be in that remote little kirkyard overlooking Loch Alvie, instead of in some great church or cathedral. . . . Strange, strange!”

As I listened, I saw again a white farm house, standing four-square to the hills. A morning of perfect September weather eight years ago. The green space in front of the house glowing like a jewel in the clear sunshine. The twittering of birds, the scent of heather drifting in and out of the open window. No drawn blinds, no funeral black, and voices not hushed but only vibrating with thankfulness that he had slept away in absolute peace like a child, among his beloved hills.*

• Since early morning my young half-sister and I had been busy unpacking the beautiful wreaths and flowers which had been arriving in great crates and boxes from London and abroad. We would

*My father's house being let at the time, he had been staying in the farm house of Tullochgrue.

smile and exclaim at the loveliness of lilies and roses, carnations and laurel, as we lifted them out of their wrappings. But the sweetest tribute came from one who had been his gardener at Alltnacriche in past years. It was a bunch comprising one of every flower, shrub and herb in that garden; with it a slip of paper. . . . "He loved these."

Then, indeed, the tears flowed. But only to soften and deepen the smiles.

Presently from within the house appeared one or two of a little band of friends, farmers mostly, who were come to help us. They brought a couple of wooden chairs and placed them on the grass. Around these we arranged heather, bracken, the bright scarlet berries of the rowan tree, bog-myrtle (my mother's favourite) from Alltnacriche, and then the more conventional offerings, beginning with a magnificent laurel wreath from the Musicians' Company ("To the memory of a great musician.")

Following the old Scottish custom, the coffin, gay with country flowers, was carried out of the house and placed upon the chairs. More friends had assembled by this time, but with three exceptions—my mother's brother, Hayden Bailey, Sir D. Y. Cameron, and Captain Balfour of Dawyck—all were from the countryside. No formal announcement of the funeral had been made. He would have hated that. And somehow it didn't seem like a funeral at all.

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills. . . ." My sister and I, a little away from the rest, listened to the glorious words. We had put on black frocks just for the morning; to satisfy convention, but we both carried posies of red flowers; and as soon as the funeral was over we went back into the bright colours Father had loved so well. He could not bear "mourning."

A flight of plover suddenly arose and circled over the house, their wings gleaming like silver in the sunlight.

There was no hearse. The coffin was taken to Alvie church in the car in which Father had always driven—when he took a car at all—and by the same young man, William Hay.

It is nearly four miles from Tullochgrue to Alvie and we drove quickly, almost gaily, in the sunshine. It was this glorious sun-



"Taken unawares."
George Henschel and his grandson, Peter Claughton.

shine, and the flock of silver birds, and the incredible peace and beauty of the hills, that evoked a feeling of exaltation, remaining with me all day.

But not afterwards. Oh, not afterwards!

When we arrived at Alvie I slipped into the church, and while the coffin was being carried to the corner of the church-yard where my mother's grave is, I played Luther's Hymn and *Jesu, Joy of man's desiring* on that same harmonium.

And my mind travelled back—and back—to how it all came about.

CHAPTER 2.

It was in 1891 that my parents decided to change the venue of our summer holiday from Switzerland to the Scottish Highlands. Until then, my father had indulged his passion for mountains in the Bernese Oberland. I can just remember a tiny village called Bönigen, on the Lake of Brienz; and a little inn presided over by a lovely Swiss family (not Robinson) of several generations, beginning with an apple-cheeked grandma in a gophered linen cap as white as the Alps in whose shadow she had always lived. I can remember occasional expeditions to Thun and Interlaken, and literally following in my father's footsteps by taking an immensely long walk with him, something like six miles, over a mountain road, when the number of my years was one to each mile. This feat was a source of great swollen-headedness in me, and of great pride in my father. I can remember being terrified by the sound of the huge Alpine horns echoing across the valleys, summoning up a vision of the Day of Judgment.

And I can still recapture the curious feeling of fear that had oppressed my small mind hours beforehand, on the day when the village of Grindelwald was wiped out by fire.

My parents and some friends had gone to Wengen the day before, and were to walk across the mountains to join my grandmother and my aunt and me at Grindelwald. We drove to Grindelwald in the morning, riding luxuriously in a barouche. "How delightful," said Grossel, "how delightful these long mountain *walks* are. And not at all tiring." She was never allowed to forget that remark!

There had been some slight hitch in the plans for the trek across the pass, and my parents were delayed for several hours. The Föhn, that cruel, hungry, hot wind—which is one of Switzerland's curiously frightening attributes—was blowing menacingly. One was oppressed with heat and almost blown away at the same time. As the minutes and hours passed, with no sign of our

travellers, Gossel and my aunt grew apprehensive. Their nervousness began to affect me, till at last I was in a real agony of terror and felt that I should probably never see my parents again. The orchestra in the hotel where we awaited Father and Mother was playing the overture to *William Tell* as my blind fear reached its sickening peak; and, to this day, that pleasant piece of music has been quite ruined for me in consequence.

The horrid atmosphere was not lightened even after the family were once more safely re-united. Luncheon in the hotel was not quite over when my mother's maid—who rejoiced in the Sheridanesque name of Constance Rochester—rushed up to our table, gasped, "The hotel is on fire!" and burst into tears.

It was then that the wickedness of the Föhn became apparent, for with incredible speed it fanned the flames into a raging furnace. Pandemonium and hysteria broke loose. As we drove away at a gallop we saw some of the hotel servants throwing glasses and dinner-sets out of third-storey windows—in order to save them from the fire!

That drive was a nightmarish race. We rushed through villages where peasants hurried to put wet earth and stones on their roofs, to prevent their houses being burnt or blown away or both. The whole sky was lit up in our wake by the blazing fields and woods. Doré might have painted it. When my father, having put us into our carriage, insisted on entering the burning hotel to pay his bill, my grandmother's piteous cries of "My son, my son!" added very largely to the dramatic side of it all.

Such experiences do not tend to increase one's enthusiasm for the place where they happened. And the grandeur and immensity of the Alps make them rather oppressive, I think, as close neighbours. I feel sure one doesn't become aware of this when in Switzerland for winter sports: being *on* the mountains instead of always in their shadow is probably enjoyable. But alas! I have not yet had this thrilling experience, and do not suppose I ever shall.

Whatever the cause, my parents hearing from various friends of the beauty of the Scottish Highlands, decided to take a house there for the summer of 1891. So much did they trust the judg-

ment of a friend who recommended the Manse of Alvie, Inverness-shire, that they bought a pig in a poke and took it without first going to see it.

On the journey northward from Perth to Inverness, beyond the beautiful wooded country around Blair Atholl and Pitlochry, the train begins to climb laboriously to barren moors which seem to grow bleaker and bleaker and more and more forbidding as one goes on. I well remember how our hearts sank as we chugged up-hill into greater and greater desolation, wondering if the Manse of Alvie would turn out to be set in the midst of this remote and cheerless-looking country.

Having attained a little station called Dalwhinnie, beside whose engaging name a sign laconically announced "Summit," the train began to descend. Our spirits, on the contrary, rose. For we were emerging into indescribable beauty. The great moors fell back, and the immediate countryside opened into a dream of silver birch woods, rushing streams, noble fir trees, and wild flowers in great profusion. I am afraid here of writing either like a guide-book or talking about a "riot of colour," so will hasten on to Alvie Manse.*

A lovely place is Alvie. It takes its name from the loch, above whose banks stands the white church that was destined to play a large part in the life and death of my father and of my mother.

The manse, a typically solid Highland house, rather uncompromising-looking outside, gazed at us as appraisingly as we gazed at it the first time we saw it. But when we had gone through the comfortable square rooms behind the thick walls, glanced out of their gleaming windows at the incomparable view, and above all been welcomed by the Rev. James Anderson and his wife, the spell began to be laid upon us. Dr. Halliday Sutherland, in his book *Hebridean Journey*, has delineated perfectly the atmosphere I mean. "There is," he writes, "something distinctive about the manses of Scotland.

*This sentence reminds me of the severe Scottish cleric who was preaching a sermon on The World, the Flesh and the Devil, and outlined his intended progression thus: "We will first, my friends, survey the world—touch lightly on the flesh—and hasten on to the devil."

"Outwardly they are substantial and undecorated as a large farm house, but lack the out-buildings of a farm. Inwardly they possess the combined atmosphere of old leather-bound volumes and fresh-cut flowers, and on the Sabbath morning you can sense the preoccupied calm of the man who is about to lead his neighbours in the public worship of God."

Those glorious early mornings; those before-breakfast rides or walks; those lazy afternoons in the honey-scented heather with a book, baking in the sun! Yes, baking in the sun. Those sceptics who imagine that it is never warm and dry in Scotland should know that I have experienced as much perfect weather there as anywhere in the world.

My father once said: "An E flat major chord by Beethoven somehow sounds quite different from anyone else's E flat major chord." In the same way, a fine summer day or a day of late autumn in Scotland has a quality entirely and exquisitely its own.

To me, as a small girl, the place was Paradise. There was a little farm attached to the manse, and at my urgent request I was soon taught to milk the cows. So proficient did I become under the tuition of Jessie Macdonald the dairy-maid, that I was able to undertake the whole of the dairy work single-handed when she was ill for a week.

Like all children, however, especially female children, I became more royalist than the king, and drove my parents nearly crazy by the one-sidedness of my conversation at meal times. I could talk of nothing but cows, calves, milk averages, while the smell of cow-byre assailed their protesting if devoted nostrils at every turn. How happy I was!

As tenants of the manse, we felt it our duty to attend the Sunday services in the Alvie church. As far as the music went, they were just like any service of the Established Church in a rather small place in the Highlands. There was a great deal of singing, led by a precentor who produced his voice in the nasal manner peculiar to the un-trained singers of Gaelic. The service, of course, was conducted in English.

Where the church did not possess an organ, the precentor used

to be armed with a tuning-fork. But our kirk boasted a little harmonium, conscientiously but sometimes startlingly manœuvred by local ladies.

My father, encouraged with great subtlety by the "crafty" and beloved Mr. Anderson, eventually decided to undertake the musical side of the morning services whenever he was "in residence." Very soon the Alvie kirk congregations began to suffer a sea-change; the rich and strange, in the shape of summer visitors, began to hear rumours of unusual Sunday music by the waters of Loch Alvie. Which, incidentally, brings back the picture of a stout rowing-boat coming across the loch on fine Sabbath mornings, bringing Lord and Lady Zetland and their children to church, from their shooting lodge at Kinrara. When the sexton saw the boat rounding the point, he would start to ring the bell.

It was a sad day for Alvie when the Zetlands eventually gave up Kinrara; a more dear couple could hardly be imagined. All the best attributes of true aristocracy—not the merely accidental aristocracy of birth, but the deepest aristocracy of soul—were theirs. Simplicity and kindness and consideration, springing from their own happiness in each other. Even when the Lodge was full of their grandchildren, riding past on my pony I sometimes surprised the old people walking hand-in-hand like any couple of young lovers, and the memory of them breathes life for me into those lovely lines of Edward Shanks—

"So some old couple, who in youth
With love were filled and over-full,
And loved with strength and loved with truth,
In heavy age are beautiful."

My father was delighted to find so many beautiful old chorales included in the music of the Scottish Psalter and Hymnal, and gradually introduced the congregation to several of the less familiar ones. But his greatest pleasure was his "discovery" of *O Love that wilt not let me go*, which none of us had known before. His joy in George Matheson's touching words, and the music that fitted them so well made the hymn very much his own. I do not think anyone

who heard him and my mother "leading the praise" at Alvie could ever forget their singing of it.

O Love, that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in Thee,
I give Thee back the life I owe,
That in Thine ocean's depths, its flow
May richer, fuller, be.

O Light, that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to Thee.
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in Thy sunshine's blaze, its day
May brighter, fairer, be.

O Joy, that seekest me through pain.
I cannot close my heart to Thee.
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain
That morn shall tearless be.

O Cross, that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from Thee,
I lay in dust life's glory, dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red,
Life, that shall endless be. . . .

The third verse is engraved on the plaque we placed in Alvie church to my mother's memory in 1902. In the same church, thirty-three years later, the first verse was put on the memorial to my father, followed by these words :

This tablet was erected by residents and friends in grateful remembrance of him and of his love and constant help in the district.*

*Sir D. Y. Cameron, unveiling this memorial tablet, said : "We commemorate to-day George Henschel, singer, composer, conductor—a man greatly endowed, and greatly honoured in his generation. . . . Since early manhood he lived in this country, and if we had seen deep into the innermost sanctuary of his heart, there we might have found engraved the last and dearest place of his dreams—the Scottish Highlands; the Grampians, the waters of Loch Alvie, and Allt-na-criche, that home of song, his eyrie amid the heather and the birchwoods. . . .

"Here he came from the applause of the world which dazzles most, and found a refuge for his spirit and for the music of his heart: . . .

"To-day we are concerned with his life here, and it is for someone else to speak of the triumphs of his career in London and the great cities of Europe and America, as a singer of world-wide fame, as a composer of many songs and profound Church music, as founder of the London Symphony Concerts, as first conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and—nearer and dearer to us—as first conductor of the Scottish Orchestra. "Here he hearkened to the winds and the waters and the wild birds upon the moors and the long waning note of curlew on the wing. . . .

"Truly, as St. Francis said : 'God's servants are His minstrels, and their task is to fortify the hearts of men and to move them to joys of the spirit. . . .'

"George Henschel was of that company of 'God's minstrels.' Here his soul was enriched for the 'last things,' and as the years crept over him and the thrill of that rare voice waned, and the hold on earth slackened, he looked more and more into the things which are not seen, and listened to that stranger and lovelier music with hope and no lament. . . .

"He is ours in holy remembrance, a precious possession, a friend of rare brilliance, world-wide in his influence, an inspirer of singular richness who dwelt in spiritual beauty. . . .

He lives. And his music and his memory are as a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path."

But to return to the early days.

I have spoken of the "Macchiavellian" Mr. Anderson. The minister of Alvie Parish church was an unusual man for those days, inasmuch as he excelled in broad-mindedness, even to the extent of advising farmers to get in their hay *on the Sabbath* if there seemed danger of the weather breaking. He was beloved for the best of all reasons, for his deep humanity and love of his fellow-creatures, constantly shown, both practically and spiritually, from end to end of his very large and scattered parish.

He was "Macchiavellian" only in the sense that he used his knowledge of human nature to the utmost in order to further any beneficent end he had in view.

It did not take him long to discover how to get the most out of my father and mother ! I remember once, in the height of the shooting season, when Father said he thought that somebody else should play the organ one Sunday. Mildly he resisted and even rebuked Mr. Anderson's pleadings, saying that Church was not a show, that congregations should come to hear the word of God, not the organist, etc., etc.

"Quite true, oh quite right, Mr. Henschel," agreed the minister. "But—" his little speedwell-blue eyes bright and crinkling with laughter—"but it makes a *treemenjous* difference to the collection !"

Who could remain deaf to so obvious a truth?

They were halcyon days at Alvie in Mr. and Mrs. Anderson's time. Mrs. Anderson was the ideal minister's wife. A daughter of the Manse herself—her father had been minister of the ancient church of Insh, just across the Spey from Alvie—she seemed to have been born running a parish. Not a thing about woman's work that she did not know, could not do as well or better than any woman in the place; except, to her great sorrow, produce a family.

A magnificent creature to look at, tall, big-boned, with those fine very deep-set eyes so often seen in Scotswomen, brown and clear like burn water, bright and piercing like an eagle's. And a magnificent creature to be with, to talk to, to learn from. Full of fun, with a ringing hearty laugh matching her definite, imperious way of speaking, she could enter into the spirit of the most youthful escapades with complete sympathy. It is not strange that the little frame house on the edge of the glebe, where the Andersons lived while the manse was let, proved a sort of Mary Rose island to me, and that I grew more and more into Mrs. Anderson's shadow as time went on. She taught me to make oat-cake and scones and pancakes. What with these accomplishments and my prowess in the dairy and the byre, it was inevitable that at fourteen my dream of romance was to marry a farmer.

Not to be outdone by the parental activities in church and parish, I became an enthusiastic Sabbath-school teacher, Mrs. Anderson giving me charge of the "wee bairns" class. The youngest of these was a heavenly child of three, with eyes like corn-flowers and a deep, husky contralto voice. She would repeat after me, in an enchanting, a distractingly enchanting, manner, the "vairshe" for the day :

"Gawt . . . iss alwayss nee-ar me. . . .

Heee-ring what . . . I ssay;

Know-ing . . . all . . . my . . . thochts-and-deets . . .

(prestissimo).

All . . . my werk . . . ant play. (ppp).

I suppose Nelly Cumming is a grandmother now, but she was a most lovely little child !

My Sunday-school recollections are not all so seraphic. There was a bullet-headed little devil called Johnny Fraser (of whom I was secretly rather enamoured) in Mrs. Anderson's big boys' class, across the church from my babies. A peculiar mixture of the sacred and the profane once concluded a Sabbath-school gathering. It took place at great speed, without any pauses, and both teacher and pupil spoke in very loud, determined voices :

"Johnny Fraser, who made ye?"

"Gawt."

"Who redeemed ye?"

"Jeesiss Christ."

"Of what are ye made?"

"Awf-dust-Miss-Henschel-will-ye-get-to-the-Games-on-Sahterrdy?"

While I laboured blissfully among cattle and poultry and Sunday-school children, my parents were slowly but surely and quite unconsciously endearing themselves to the entire countryside. They loved the place so much that they naturally manifested the love to all the humans who were a part of it. They were proud indeed to find themselves welcome in any crofter's cottage or in any farm, at any time of the day; a state of affairs only possible when there is understanding and sympathy and the realisation that Highlanders are aristocrats—and aloof ones at that.

I am so glad that I can remember a lovely old couple who occupied the small farm—the house was just a cottage—by the beginning of a moorland road, at the head of which our house was eventually built.

My parents first made the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Kennedy when, out riding one day, they begged a glass of milk. They received an almost feudal welcome, the old lady beating the air with her hands in a gesture we grew to know so well. Accompanied by vigorous shakings of the head it signified a sense of the unworthiness of their "but-and-ben" to receive anything as pretty and precious as my mother, anything as famous as the conductor of the Scottish Orchestra. When unaccompanied by the head-shaking, the hands were trying to express the hospitable and

affectionate sentiments which would have come so easily in the Gaelic. The Kennedys—as their name would imply—came of the ancient Catholic stock which also peopled Northern Ireland. Gaelic came to them much more easily than English.

They were round about eighty when we first knew them, and they always made me think of Philemon and Baucis. Beautiful to look at even in old age. Mrs. Kennedy must have been a dream when young, and old Donald, too.

“Come away, come away, Mestress Hanschel my dearie, come away!” Mrs. Kennedy would cry, dusting the wheel-back arm-chair with her apron. And while Father would talk to the old man—rather tied to his chair with rheumatism was the old man—she would run to the dairy and come back with some of that miraculous milk which was really cream with an inch of milk at the bottom of it.

Early in their acquaintance Father discovered an old American organ in the parlour, and always used to play and sing to them after that. Mrs. Kennedy would sit with the tears pouring down her face, murmuring “Beautt-i-ful” and little inarticulate “Dearie-s” and bits of Gaelic. And old Donald would sit and beam, and he, too, would sometimes wipe away a tear.

The kitchen was a perfect place, though it always shocked the Kennedys rather that Father and Mother should prefer it to the parlour. A great stone hearth, with the kettle slung on an iron chain over a sweet-smelling fire of peat and wood. I can “feel” the smell now, and it makes me want to sing with Brahms:

“O wüsst’ ich doch den Weg zurück,
Den lieben Weg zum Kinderland. . . .”*

Folk like the Donald Kennedys were the last of their type, and I am thankful to have seen and known and loved them. They don’t—as they say in America—come like that nowadays.

Gradually more friendships were formed, more and more contacts made, until one day extraordinary rumours began to reach our incredulous ears. Could it be? No. Such a thing had never

*“Oh, if I only knew the road back—
The dear road back to the land of childhood.”

been heard of. Impossible. Unbelievable. And yet . . . Yes, it *was* true!

Father was to be invited to become an Elder of Alvie Church.

His protestations that he was not a member of the Church of Scotland were swept regally aside.

"It's men of character we want," spake the Wise Men.

As the rumours gave way to certainty, Mr. Anderson went so far as to tell Father and Mother *sub rosa* on what day the deputation of Elders intended to wait upon them, and he imparted the news that a presentation of water-colours (painted by Miss Martineau*) was to be made. To my parents it was to be a great occasion indeed.

If ever there was a scene in real life from the works of J. M. Barrie, this was one. The road to the manse wound for some distance round the glebe, across a corner of the loch, and so we were able to see the Procession of the Elders for quite a time before they arrived at the house. They were an impressive sight. All in Sunday black, most of them 'with at least one collie, also black. Soon we heard their footsteps in the hall, then coming up the stairs to the drawing-room where my parents, pre-ministerially instructed but apparently unaware, awaited them. The awe-stricken and excited maid having ushered them in, they proceeded to dispose themselves with due solemnity upon the unusually large number of chairs with which Mr. Anderson's foresight had caused the drawing-room to be suddenly furnished. After a few moments for settlings down, hem's and ha's, dog-quietenings and the like, the oldest member of the deputation began.

I knew very little about speeches and speakers at that time, but I knew enough to realise that I was listening to words that came straight from the heart. My own heart started fairly to burst with pleasure and pride, to feel that Father and Mother were being so much appreciated. This emotion grew upon me as the speech

*Dr. Martineau, the famous preacher, lived a few miles away at Rothiemurchus, with his two daughters; one of them painted charmingly, and both of them carried on a wood-carving class in the village, whence really beautiful things emerged every year.

went on, and when I myself was—to my amazement—included in it, and presented with an exquisite cut glass and silver scent bottle and a silver card case (two of my great treasures), I burst into tears: which the elders, human as they all were, realised was a more eloquent expression of my gratitude than any words could have been.

The proceedings then became more informal. Cakes, cigars and whisky appeared on the scene. I shall never forget the apprehension on one after another of those grand old faces as I followed Father and the whisky with a jug of water. I was given the “When” signal almost before my jug got anywhere near the glass. but only one brave man—Donald McDonald—had the courage to stop me before one solitary drop of water had polluted the whisky.

“Na, na,” he said. “I can get watter at home.”

Poor Donald! Many years later, my father, hearing that Donald was getting frail and almost bed-ridden, mounted his pony and rode the ten miles or so to Donald’s farm; to take him a bottle of whisky and some cigars, and to have a chat with him. “I must go to see the dear old man!” exclaimed my youthful parent, he himself being over seventy, and several years older than Donald.

It did not take many summers to determine Father and Mother to build a house of their own at Alvie if they possibly could. They had their eye on a site about half a mile up into the hills from Donald Kennedy’s farm, looking down a glen of birch and heather to the Cairngorms—Cairngorm, Brae Riach and Ben MacDhuie. Away to the South you could on clear days see an incredible number of miles into Perthshire. Behind the house-to-be the cart-road wound up over the moors to the head of the Dulnan River. An ideal spot. Father and Mother took a special trip to America, to sing their way into paying for the site, and the building of the house began in 1900.

It did not cover a great deal of ground and none of the rooms were very large. But the architect, Mr. Carruthers of Inverness, averred that he learned more from my mother’s New England common sense in the matter of cupboards and the utilising of every inch of space than he’d ever acquired elsewhere. Wide shallow

drawers were built into small wall-spaces which might easily have been wasted, narrow strips of mirror let in between windows, all sorts of gadgets devised. They have become common enough since, but were an innovation in those days of heavy and cumbersome furniture. It was all exciting, and my parents like small children with a new toy.

For the last two summers we had stayed in a modest little cottage at Kincraig, and we spent most of our time trekking over to "The Site." I can see my mother now, with the silver tape-measure father gave her, engraved "L.B.H. Alltnacriche," planning and calculating and making notes. In the evenings she would sit and embroider new house-linen, for everything was to be new in the precious house. . . . How happy she was!

There was only one fly in the ointment. Mother's health. For years she had occasionally been tormented with horrible internal pains which went under the vague name of "attacks." But her hatred of making a fuss, plus her great courage, never allowed her to take much notice of them. Lately the pains had been growing more frequent and worse, and she would sometimes be prostrated for days, though hanging on and going about her ordinary life until she dropped.

Alltnacriche, by the early summer of 1901, was ready. The doctor sent Mother there to be quiet and to enjoy the happy task of settling in. Father and I were to follow later, when his season's work and my school term were over. When Mother greeted us on our arrival, she looked like a very young and contented child. The busy weeks that followed were probably among the happiest of her short life.

As for Father—an excited schoolboy!

Stopford Brooke, one of our visitors that summer, laughed at him just as one would laugh at an over-enthusiastic boy. Everything to Father was "Glorious!" Rain, sun, thunder, lightning, tempest—"Isn't it glorious!" he would shout. Mr. Brooke would egg him on, make him say it again, and laugh. He was moved to compose a poem, *The Uprising of Alltnacriche*:

Macphersons and Grants may now knuckle down.
And Richmond and Gordon can go up to town,
All the proud clans have received a great shock,
They can't hold a candle to Allt-na-criock.

Glorious, oh glorious,
Simply, simply glorious!

Dunachton and Alvie, Kinrara and Doune
And all the proud castles that flaunt in the moon,
And Balavil, Cluny and Invereshie—
Oh, what are they all to superb Alltnacree?

Glorious, oh glorious,
Simply, simply glorious!

O were Ossian alive and Macpherson his bard,
And the Wild Cat whose brood is so thick on the sward,
Red Comyn, and Huntly, and Wolf Badenoch,
They would all be confounded by Alltnacrioch.

Glorious, oh glorious,
Simply, simply glorious!

I like to think, and indeed I firmly believe, that Mother could never have been happier at Alltnacriche than she was in those few months, however long she had lived. For the "Uprising of Alltnacriche" really was a dream come true, and dreams don't come true often in a lifetime.

Father and I returned to London in early October, but Mother stayed on in the care of a devoted maid, Katie Mackintosh, to rest—so we were told—before the winter's work began. No one but my father and she knew that it was really to rest before the serious operation which the doctors had now decided to be imperative.

It was so like my parents to keep all that worry and anxiety to themselves.

Mother came South in early November, leaving Katie to close the house. On the evening of November 4th, 1901, Katie (who has the "seeing eye") was walking across the moor from her cottage to Alltnacriche. All the way she saw a little light going before her.

A little flame, she said. Now high, now low, until it finally disappeared into the house and was seen no more.

That was the moment Mother died, in the house on Campden Hill.

Thus, heartrendingly, the building of Alltnacriche was finished.



Lillian and Helen.

From a Photograph.

CHAPTER 3.

There are those who consider that personal character has nothing to do with an artist's performance. Directly, perhaps not. But when a lovely and joyful spirituality exists as part of the singer's personality, it must surely produce something beyond mere artistic brilliancc. I know it was because both my father and mother were so deeply imbued with this quality that their art—even their very presence—created an atmosphere of sheer happiness and well-being far beyond that evoked by music alone. Their joy and their pride in each other, artistically and personally, was so unconsciously and simply manifest as somehow to carry itself over into the audience. This did not apply only to intimate audiences in their own music room. At the time of my mother's death, letters from total strangers in many different countries evinced a sense of personal loss such as could not have been aroused without that flame of inward radiance which illuminated and gave life to everything she sang.

For instance, a Dutch lady wrote: "One of her great and fervent admirers, though an absolute stranger, I feel as if I had lost a good friend, as if something very beautiful had gone out of my life. . . ."

My father collected a number of lovely tributes to my mother and made them into a book which he gave me on my twentieth birthday, with this dedication :

"To My Daughter
on her twentieth birthday."

"It has often been said that in a grief as overwhelming as ours, when your grandparents lost the gentlest daughter, you the sweetest mother, I the truest wife, words could be no real comfort."

"To a great extent this must be so; and it is not for that purpose the following pages are printed. But when I look through the more than a thousand letters of love and sympathy which reached us from all parts of the world, many of them written by

people who had hardly known your mother except through sight and hearing, the tributes paid to the dear memory of her personality strike me as so extraordinary that I wish to preserve at least a few of them as a means of showing you how great and wonderful a power for good even a short life may encompass if lived, like hers, in love, truth and purity; and how such a life is like the sun, gladdening the world, even in setting, with the message of a new rising and of Love eternal."

Here are one or two pages from the little book my father made for me :—

"I could never think of her art as something apart from her personality. For me it was always the kind, sweet, noble woman singing that rejoiced my heart.

"The choir invisible has gained a voice of winsome melody, but I could wish it had not been hushed for us so soon. It seems a poorer world in which she does not sing."

(From Mrs. J. W. Mackail, daughter of Burne-Jones) :

"Remembering, when my own most dear father went from us, that I was glad and grateful for even the remotest sympathy, and remembering his affection for her, and her quite particular and sweet kindness to me always, I feel you won't mind my adding my word to the universal grief at your and the world's unspeakable loss. . . ."

"If life be measured by the joy it gives, her life was indeed a long one."

". . . I try to realise it. But when thought of her comes, I hear the wonderful joy and sweetness of her voice, see the truthful, kind, sweet, loyal face, see her full of life, and so she will remain always. No one can take her place. . . . Remember that many people would give a lifetime for one day of the perfect happiness your two hearts have known."

"My heart aches and I cannot stop my tears.

"Since my childhood I have been devoted to her; I loved her sweet nature and admired her rare accomplishments."

"The memory of your incomparable wife will for ever remain in our hearts. With feelings of deepest gratitude we shall ever think of her who as a woman and as an artist has been a benefactress of the noblest kind."

"In her there passed away a character so lovable and peculiar in its completeness as to recall the writings of great masters of fiction, who by taking what is best in women and moulding it into one, succeed in creating a character verging on the perfect and yet true to nature.

"For most rare indeed was the accumulation of the truest, best qualities of heart and mind in this *humble* woman, at whose death the tears of sorrow and grief in the eyes of the many who loved her, must give way to tears of rejoicing and gratitude for the blessings of as beautiful and unselfish, as good and noble a life as hers was. . . ."

"The memory of that life—a life consecrated with absolute and unswerving devotion to the highest and purest ideals, will be a constant inspiration to many who, like myself, followed afar off. . . ."

"I cannot express my respect and admiration, not only for her great intellectual gifts, but much more for her pure spirit and noble character. Her memory shall be to me an inspiration for beauty, truthfulness, benevolence."

Henry James lamented "the extinction, in full vitality, of anything so beautiful and beneficent as your wife's exquisite presence in the world. . . ."

Most perfectly of all, perhaps, was she described by Stopford Brooke, when he said :

"There never lived a brighter, fairer, more lovable character, nor one who did more to make the world she knew, better and fairer."

At the intimate funeral service for my mother, which was held in the music room at Bedford Gardens, Stopford Brooke spoke—over the little silver-draped coffin with its pall of pink roses—such moving words that I am constrained to set them down here, copying them from his own minute and clear manuscript which he gave to me. I feel that such comforting words should not be lost; that they may well offer consolation to many a sorrowing heart.

“Almighty God, our heavenly Father, of whose nearer love death is but the gate, we bid farewell in Thy immortal presence to the earthly dust of Thy child and friend.

Her life was tender, faithful and true, useful, sweet and loving. All who knew her loved her. She made love, truth and service more dear to us. Her sweetness made her home a garden of flowers by unfailing love. She was happy, and she made happiness, and this was a divine grace in her which we shall remember all our lives and for which we thank Thee who gave her to us for our good and blessing.

We bid her earthly body farewell in perfect hope and faith that our farewell is but for a time and that we shall meet her again in the eternal world. She has now her Being in Thy endless joy and love. Her love is still alive and those who lived so happily with her here may love her still and rejoice in her happiness in heaven as they loved and rejoiced with her happiness on earth.

We sorrow, but our sorrow shall be turned into joy. Therefore we say with Saint Paul, ‘For she is within the welcoming love of Jesus.’

Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. So also is the resurrection of the dead. . . .

Eternal light and love, and our eternal life, the perfect Light and Love and life of her spirit whom we have placed in Thy hands to-day—we know she has always been Thine, but it is our longing to tell Thee of our grief and faith, to bring Thy healing power and comfort to our hearts. We are Thy children and we speak our heart to Thee, our Father.

Her child and husband cry to Thee—take our beloved to Thy endless joy, welcome her with Thy love, lead her by the still waters and in the meadows of comfort, let her speak to us in spirit while we live; Jesus, our brother, receive her, Thou who loved us so well, and say to her, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'

And we, who are left behind, make us strong of soul to bear our grief and to make out of it peace and a loving life; that we may be worthy to meet her in the life to come.

Thou knowest the pain of parting, our loneliness of soul. Thy Son wept over the grave of His friend, and Thou lovedst Him the more for His sorrow. Give us sweet memories in our pain; and soothe our grief into spiritual strength. And in the midst of the sorrow which Thou dost not reprove, keep us also in a sacred joy, lest sorrow should lead us to forget the pain of all Thy children. Deepen our personal sorrow into sympathy with all who suffer. Give us faith to be happy in her happiness who has gone before us, and wisdom and power to follow her self-forgetful life, till at last sorrow pass into overflowing tenderness and the memory of her goodness illuminate our lives, inspire our thought and dwell in us as virtue and love, joy and inspiration. So shall the visible be mingled with the invisible and our life on earth with her life in heaven, and she watch us with joy and we hear her voice in spirit.

Our Father, be Thou the all-uniting Spirit between us, until that tender day arrive when we shall part no more in Jesus Christ our Lord.

The peace of God . . . which passeth all understanding. . . ."

I do not wish to write of the months immediately following Mother's death. I was afraid for my father. If life without her seemed inconceivable to me, what must have it have been to him! They had been parted only very rarely during the twenty-two years they had known each other. When they did have to separate, they wrote to each other every day. Father took no step without her,

had no thought apart from her, no joy away from her either in work or play.

Out of his first passion of grief came the Requiem Mass.

He began it straight after my mother's funeral, and worked at white heat until the piano score was finished three months later. Each evening he would play and sing me what he had written, so that I knew by heart the whole beautiful thing when it was complete.

It is not because my father wrote it, and my mother inspired it, that I claim for this Requiem a quality belonging only to great works of art. As though it had written itself, every note seems inevitable, could not have been otherwise. This does not mean my father put down phrase after phrase as it came into his head. On the contrary, there was thought and significance behind every note, right to the whispered final bars, where above the "Amen" and the cloudy *pianissimo* arpeggios of the harp there rises in the strings the last phrase my mother had ever sung: "Paradisi Gloria," from a *Stabat Mater* of my father's.

The full score was finished by the autumn of 1902, and in early December of that year the work received its first performance. In Boston, and rightly so. One of Boston's foremost music critics, after hearing rehearsals, wrote this :

"The Cecilia Society announces the new Requiem by George Henschel for the December concert. The composer will conduct the work, and the soloists will be Miss Henschel, Miss Woltmann and Mr. Ellison van Hoose.

It was a remarkable career that closed last fall with the death of Mrs. Henschel. For artistry and fine womanly virtues no other singer has won the esteem and unfailing acclaim that were Mrs. Henschel's everywhere. . . .

No singer has year by year commanded such audiences. Her singing and her personality alike won the hearts of the people. Her rank is unique as the standard of all that is lovable, womanly, tender and fine in song.

There was such a complete oneness of wedded life illustrated in Mr. and Mrs. Henschel that their names are to the music

world what the Brownings are to literature. Thus the work which was begun the day after the burial, as a memorial to the wife, has an interest that can hardly be matched. This Requiem is truly a record of the beautiful and noble service which their life together exemplified. It reveals not the selfish inaction of grief, but the energy of love, producing a work fair and lovely enough to set the seal of life, not death, upon their history. It is the composer's masterpiece.

It is fitting that the first performance should be here in Boston, though it will be produced later in other parts of the United States, and at Leipzig by Mr. Nikisch. It was in Boston that Lillian Bailey had her *début*, under the guidance of Mr. B. J. Lang who is now instrumental in producing the Requiem. She was an enthusiastic member of the Cecilia and when, a year ago last Spring, Mr. Henschel gave his *Stabat Mater* here, in which Mrs. Henschel sang in Boston for the last time, the choral parts were sung by the Cecilia. At all rehearsals for that work the chorus had the inspiration of Mrs. Henschel's presence, heard her lovely singing, saw her eager interest in every detail of her husband's work. The day before this performance, Mr. and Mrs. Henschel had given their daughter her Boston *début*, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the mother's first appearance. The whole audience was alive to the pride and pleasure of the parents, and it was a time of intimate friendly feeling rather than of public hearing and judgment. Yet this girl singer proved herself every inch an artist.

This young daughter will sing the solo soprano part in the work which commemorates her mother. Such a circumstance alone is enough to give the occasion a rare, pathetic character; and the presence of Mr. Henschel at the conductor's desk will stir the deeps of human kinship to give this work such a hearing as is seldom accorded any expression of genius, in the attuning of the listeners' thought to the composer's thought, till they hear as he hears."

Since then, the Requiem has been performed in many different places. Only in London it has not yet been performed since my

father's death. I longed to produce the work myself, but how could I possibly engage the Queen's Hall, an orchestra, a chorus, and a conductor?

I was one day bewailing this impasse to my friend, Thomas Dunhill. He said: "Show this work to Claud Powell, at Guildford."

I had heard a great deal about the fine work done by this gifted musician, both as conductor and choirmaster, with his enthusiastic band of players and singers. Dunhill brought him to my house, and from this meeting there resulted in April 1937 a performance of the Requiem which in some ways can never be surpassed.

Joan Cross, that peerless singer, sang the soprano solos. She wrote afterwards: "I shall remember last night throughout my lifetime; it was a privilege to 'look in' on it all." Most worthily in her company were the tenor, Harry Bates—who had sung in the Requiem before, when he was in the choir at All Saints', Margaret Street—and Bruce Boyce, the American bass.

All the artists gave us their services, and I sang the contralto solos. I also conducted a few of the choral rehearsals. Perhaps I infected the ladies and gentlemen of the choir with some of my own particular emotion and enthusiasm, which Mr. Powell shared to the full. I don't know. Whatever the cause, in spite of the fact that both choir and orchestra were only about half the size required by the score of the Requiem, and were only sparsely augmented by professional players and singers, it is certain that this performance of Henschel's *Missa pro Defunctis* possessed a quality and produced an effect which I have never experienced before or since.

The letters I received from personal friends are too intimate to quote here, but the following letter to Mr. Powell will illustrate what I mean:

"Dear Powell,

I cannot go to bed before I write a line to you, as a very humble lover of good music . . . to say how deeply moved was I by the Henschel work to-night. There are moments of sublime

inspiration throughout it, and your reading and your Chorus' work gripped me in a manner not often experienced.

If you could do it again I should like it to be broadcast to every cathedral in the country. It would do more than all the Archbishops in the universe to bring folk back to a sense of true religious feeling. Thank you for an experience seldom equalled and more rarely met."

So wrote Col. Pleydell-Bouverie.

The dedication of the work is :

"Manibus Sacrum

LILLIANAE

Canorae Musarum Interpretis

Filiae Pientissimae

Uxoris Fidissimae

Matris Amantissimae "

May it not be that the spirit which evoked this dedication has the same source as the power that would "... bring folk back to a sense of true religion"?

In his later years Father often said to me that he had lived three distinct lives.

Those first difficult early days of study, of development, and finally of brilliant youthful success.

Then his life with my mother, the life of which I have written. With her to balance and to bring out all that was best in him, he reached the height of his career and the full unfolding of his character. That character blossomed into *more* beauty, *more* sweetness, *more* tolerance, as he grew older.

But, just as his greatest worldly successes had been attained by "the Henschels," so it was as half of "the Henschels" that he became the rare spirit whose light enriched the lives of all with whom he came in contact.

And let it never be forgotten that it was my mother who kindled and tended the flame.

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